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## Cedar Point debuts biggest investment ever

AT: Tim Baldwin

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SANDUSKY, Ohio — Cedar Point no longer releases investment figures, but the resort has revealed that the Hotel Breakers makeover is the biggest investment the park has ever undertaken. With Top Thrill Dragster costing \$25 million in 2003, that certainly speaks to what is on display for this season — and beyond. In addition to the new hotel grandeur, Cedar Point has also made new upgrades and additions in several areas of the park.

Hotel Breakers dates back to 1905, a time when most guests coming to Cedar Point were actually arriving by boat. The hotel's historic rotunda has always been configured more toward the beach side of the property. As the decades progressed, automobiles took over and eventually the hotel welcomed visitors from what was originally the back of the building. In more than a century of history, wings have come and gone, tower additions were added, and the specific number of rooms have always been in flux. Hotel Breakers opened with 600 rooms, all with running water, but not all included private baths. With the Bon Air wing added in 1926, the number of rooms increased to 875. Breakers East added rooms in 1995 and Breakers Tower added even more in 1999. As modern com-

► See RESORT, page 4



Cedar Fair recently completed its largest investment ever at the Cedar Point Resort. The 2015 improvements included a massive makeover to the historic Hotel Breakers (above) that now gives guests the choice of staying in remodeled rooms or newly-created suites and more activities beachside during the evening hours. At Cedar Point, guests now find the new Sweet Spot (below left) awaiting their sweet tooth along the main midway, while coaster fans are enjoying the new B&M floorless trains on Rougarou, formerly the Mantis stand-up coaster. AT/TIM BALDWIN



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# NEWSTALK

**OPINION:** Tim Baldwin, [tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com](mailto:tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com)

## A good idea takes flight



Baldwin

When someone is passionate about the amusement industry as I am, coupled with the opportunity to visit numerous (as in hundreds) of facilities around the world, it is expected to see similar successful things over and over again. Whether they be a hot line of ride product or an inviting business strategy, proven formulas tend to be repeated in various venues. Every now and then I am taken by something different, and I surprise even myself at how an idea I wouldn't have thought of makes such an enjoyable impression on me.

Such was the case when I visited Morey's Piers this past June. The folks there have created something special. Breakfast in the Sky is a fun concept that capitalizes on the property's strengths — an oceanfront setting with magnificent views, an on-staff chef and an inviting giant Ferris wheel. What's particularly brilliant is the Morey's leadership utilizes their resources at a time of day when the piers are not in operation. This gives them the opportunity to do something special for people who want to be integrated into an experience that transcends far above the ordinary.

Meals on Ferris wheels certainly aren't unheard of. They typically involve the monumental "city" wheels that have enclosed capsules which are large enough to contain tables and chairs. Morey's doesn't have that luxury, which makes their venture all the more clever.

Once seated in a gondola, it was great fun to see a table being completed before me, a white table cloth positioned and then secured in place by ingenious grasps. Within minutes the table was complete with plates, condiments and flowers. Seeing the service staff make it all happen before our eyes had everyone in my cabin brimming with big smiles. Soon, our meal arrived — delicious I might add — and our revolution into the sky began. For close to an hour we enjoyed sunrise views of the Atlantic shore and the surrounding Wildwoods area. A gentle breeze added to the perfect ambience.

My hat goes off to Morey's Piers for not only creating revenue in a time when the pier is usually closed to operations, but creating a bucket list experience one can't find every day. Breakfast in the Sky launched in 2010, and its annual return is evidence of the benefits it provides to both visitors and the Piers. The experience is offered July 25 – August 24, three days a week. A superb idea.

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



## Saving the past

I've commented in this column previously about the importance of ensuring the history of amusement/theme parks and the industry in general is not forgotten and that artifacts, old rides and equipment and even old parks themselves continue to be saved for generations to come.

A prime example of the latter has just been witnessed in the U.K. with the re-opening after a 12 year campaign of Dreamland Margate, a traditional seaside amusement park in Kent on the southeast coast of England.

Dreamland is the oldest surviving amusement park in the U.K. and it was the Dreamland Trust that originated the project, secured the necessary funding for redevelopment and managed its delivery.

The Trust's chairman Nick Laister has commented that "the idea for rebuilding Dreamland as an attraction that celebrates amusement park and seaside history and culture was something that we came up with in 2007. It seemed so right to rescue rides that were being destroyed in amusement park redevelopments, at the height of the property bubble, and rebuild them alongside the Scenic Railway in a vibrant new visitor

attraction at Dreamland."

Indeed, the Scenic Railway is a prime example of the determination of those who care and are so passionate about such things — Laister's initial involvement with Dreamland began in 2001 when he successfully asked the U.K. government to give listed building status to the ride. This is now just

one of many attractions, artifacts and other historic industry items to be found on the site that have been saved from oblivion, in the main due to dedicated people putting in the necessary hard work and effort to do so.

It's a scenario that has been and continues to be played out in other parts of the world too, and not just in the amusement industry of course, with people who are prepared to give so much time and effort in the pursuit of certain goals. It's good to know the amusement and theme park industry has such enthusiastic supporters and that historically significant items — and in this case a complete park (albeit with some different attractions now to those it first opened with) — are being saved for future generations to enjoy.



Mellor

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# 2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

## Omid Aminifard, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Omid Aminifard has been with the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk since 2000. Previously director of operations, Omid was promoted to vice president of Boardwalk operations in May 2015 with responsibility for the day-to-day guest experience and operation of the park. He also serves on IAAPA's Amusement Parks and Attractions Committee. Before coming to the Boardwalk, Omid worked as the director of operations for the Stratosphere Hotel in Las Vegas. He was born in Iran and moved to the United States in the late 1970s. Omid met his wife Tricia while working at the Boardwalk; they have three very active boys.



Omid Aminifard with his wife Tricia, their three boys and their family dog.

**Title:**  
Vice President of Operations.

**Number of years with Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk:**  
15.



Aminifard

**Best thing about the industry:**  
That no two days are ever the same.

**Favorite amusement ride:**  
The Space Shot at the top of the Stratosphere in Las Vegas.

**If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be...**  
A lawyer.

**Biggest challenge facing our industry...**  
Government regulations on all levels.

**The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is...**  
Getting out in the park and meeting new employees.

**Favorite appetizer:**  
Mini smoked hot dogs.

**The last time I danced was...**  
In late 2014!

**The best movie I saw this past summer was...**  
"Max" ... the story of an Army dog.

**It's 7 a.m. Where would we typically find you?**  
Making breakfast for my boys, getting ready for work and checking my e-mail.

**If I could go back in time, I would visit...**  
The Dark Ages.

**I always try to avoid...**  
Making my bed.

**When telemarketers call me at home I...**  
Hang up!

**The one thing I always have in my kitchen cupboard is...**  
Oatmeal.

**Favorite national sports team:**  
San Diego Chargers. The last time I went to the doctor, he told me that I had powder blue and gold in my veins, an MRI showed that I had thunderbolts on the brain. I asked him, "So everything is normal?"

**If I had an extra day in my week, I would...**  
Work if my wife allowed it!

**For me, the worst show on television is...**  
"Keeping up with the Kardashians" or anything related to them.

**You just won two tickets to the World Series. Who would you take?**  
My wife or my middle son Gavin.

**The last item I purchased under \$1 was...**  
A bubblegum ball for my son.

**My coolest vacation ever was...**  
A family trip to Mexico.

**The best thing about living in California is...**  
Being close to the ocean.

**When it comes to wine... red or white?**  
Depends on my mood, I like both!

**Growing up, I wanted to be...**  
An air traffic controller.

**One of my pet peeves is...**  
When someone touches or moves anything on my desk or work area.

# THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



## AUGUST

•**1907:** As a follow-up to last month's column, fire damaged **George Tilyou's Steeplechase Park** in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on August 18, just three weeks after another fire destroyed **Steeplechase Park** in Brooklyn's **Coney Island**, New York. The fire started in the bleachers from a dropped cigarette, before a baseball exhibition game. Forty minutes later the bleachers, grandstand, the elaborate Steeplechase building and the popular Steeplechase ride had been destroyed. With little water pressure to fight the fire, the local fire department saved the remainder of the park by detonating dynamite in the path of the fire. Ironically Tilyou had announced the rebuilding of his Brooklyn park only the day before, in the August 17 edition of *Billboard* magazine. He sold the park in 1910.

•**1922:** On August 2, Judge **Alonzo W. Weed**, of the U.S. Superior Court briefly halted a divorce trial in Boston, Massachusetts, to visit **Revere Beach** outside the city. After nine days of conflicting testimony he toured the beach and joined merry-makers on a roller coaster ride, while the divorce case was put on hold. Later he told reporters that he went to Revere to verify testimony in the case. As part of his examination, he wanted to confirm that the roller coaster could be seen from the couple's apartment, which had become a key piece of testimony in the case. The trial continued the following day, although the unusual story made the morning newspapers in the Boston area.

•**1948:** In a story that circulated across the globe, a man who had not spoken a word in over five years, restored his voice after a ride on the **Cyclone** at **Coney Island**, New York. **Emilio Franco**, a 35-year-old machinist and coal miner from Fairmont, West Virginia, had not spoken a word since 1943, suffering from hysteric aphonia, a rare case which impairs speech. Visiting his Brooklyn cousin on August 11, Franco took just a single ride on the Cyclone and actually screamed during the two minute ride. Reportedly when he exited the ride, he said, "I feel sick." When he realized his voice had returned, he immediately telephoned his wife, although she initially did not believe she was actually talking to him. Coney Island publicists made it a national story with headlines titled: *Coaster Ride Restores Man's Speech* and *Voice Restored by Roller Coaster*.

•**1998:** After nearly a two month delay, the steel coaster, **Volcano: The Blast Coaster**, opened on August 15, at **Paramount's Kings Dominion**, in Doswell, Virginia. Touted as the first suspended roller coaster to be launched by linear induction motors (LIM), it utilized the existing artificial mountain structure that had contained several earlier rides. While the structure was adapted to fit the new ride, it operated at half capacity (every other row of seats were removed) its first season, creating long lines that wove through the original station queue for Smurf Mountain. Fortunately, after further modifications, Volcano would be fully operational the following season. Designed by Werner Stengel, the Intamin project included an almost vertical shot straight out of the top of the volcano at a height of 155 feet, followed by four inversions.

## MAILBAG

To the Editor,

Enjoyed Tim Baldwin's recent editorial (AT, July 2015, page 2) referencing the art that park boneyards are giving back to the facilities.

Credit where due. We used to be so focused on clean up that we used to throw too much stuff away. Now we'll constantly scour our boneyard for new-fangled ideas.

**Jack Morey, Morey's Piers**

**Wildwood, N.J.**

**Jack.Morey@moreyspiers.com**



## ► RESORT

Continued from page 1

forts were added throughout the hotel's history, some rooms were just not up to acceptable standards of the time. Just last year, the number of rooms was 650. With the dramatic makeover this season, it is down to 511, the lowest number the hotel has ever had.

However, those that have enjoyed staying on property before are sure to go "wow." The newly remodeled Hotel Breakers is nothing short of wonderful. Rooms are larger and the interiors are all new: furnishings, bathrooms, carpeting and linens — all completely fresh. The carpeting reflect the colors and patterns of waves interacting with the beach. "We call it Fun & Fresh and every part of the hotel is designed with families in mind," states Tyler Adams, manager of resort sales and marketing. "Hotel Breakers was newly designed to be a modern take on our historic beachfront hotel."

The refresh includes more electrical outlets, iHome docking stations, and free wireless internet access in each room. One-third of the rooms are now suites. The lobby has been redesigned to be two stories with photos captivating those leisurely enjoying the new space. Surf Lounge returns to the central hub, as well as a Starbucks café. What was once a long hallway when arriving by car has now been newly redesigned to have a more opulent entrance, no longer feeling like the "back" of the hotel. A new portico eliminates any stairs to enter the hotel, and

inside the lobby, new elevators have been installed. A new, larger gift shop has been placed at the entrance, as have the Tiffany glass windows that were once a nice touch to the hotel.

"I love the new beachside entrance to the hotel," comments Bryan Edwards, public relations manager of Cedar Point. "The view of the new fire pits, beach and lake as you walk out of the hotel are simply stunning. It is the definition of what a beachfront resort should look like. He adds, "And as much as I love it during the day, it gets even better in the evening."

Outside, what was once a typical swimming pool has now been replaced by a brand new children's water play area. The beach entrance now has lounging areas including four fire pits and exterior lighting at night.

Adjacent to Hotel Breakers is a new facility for catering activities. Lakeside Pavilion is an elaborate structure that allows guests to have a newer catered experience. Jason McClure, vice president and general manager of Cedar Point, feels that just having the previous tent structures right next to the new grandeur of the hotel was just not right. "It is such a beautiful view, and now the facility matches the view," McClure adds, "It connects people to the beach."

While the Lakeside Pavilion can be used for reserved catered outings, the park can also use it with the general park guests as well. "We had our first 'Brew and Barbecue' event," says McClure. The



**The Hotel Breakers massive makeover includes this newly constructed entrance (above); the revamped main lobby area (below) and these newly created suite rooms (bottom). For tech-savvy guests, all rooms now come complete with free internet connections and iHome docking stations to keep all electronics fully charged.**

AT/TIM BALDWIN



**Flying more under the radar, but receiving high praise from riders, was a change of restraints to Cedar Point's popular Maverick coaster to these new lower, softer models that no longer obstruct the rider's view and keeps their hear clear of any surfaces.** AT/TIM BALDWIN

functionality of the new pavilion appears to bring opportunity for the future of Cedar Point. "Our group business continues to grow. It is an important part of our business model."

The resort isn't the only place to receive upgrades though. Investments have been made throughout the park as well. Rougarou is the new name being marketed for one of the park's B&M roller coasters. What was once Mantis when built in 1996 has now undergone a change. The new name marks the rebranding as a stand-up coaster to a floorless coaster. Three new trains featuring floorless seating now race over the newly painted rails. Ridership on the stand-up attraction had declined in recent years. The park felt a new experience was a way to bring new life to the coaster. A unique trait is that the guests queuing to ride can actually see the floor dropping away from underneath the station, which is not something that can be viewed on any other floorless coaster around the world.

"I think the biggest marketing challenge for us was explaining to our frequent visitors that Rougarou is an entirely new ride. Social media was hard, as it's very easy for guests to give opinions on every part of our business in that space. Nobody had even experienced the ride yet, so it was hard to get buy-in from those guests," says Tony Clark, mar-

keting director for Cedar Point. So we used tools like our video series, "The Rougarou Files," to explain the transition and use our internal experts to tell guests that, yes, this is a new ride experience."

Clark adds, "I'm our resident roller coaster junkie and I can honestly say it exceeded my expectations. I'm a huge fan of the floorless coaster, so I'm ecstatic that we now have one in our lineup. It all felt familiar, but every move, loop and turn was a brand new experience."

Much more under the radar, but receiving high praise from coaster fans is a change of restraints on the park's wild Maverick roller coaster. All six trains supplied by Intamin now have new lower, softer restraints that not only don't obstruct your view, but keep your head clear of any surfaces. Commenting on the new smoother, rideable experience, McClure smiles, "People

are really going to repeat ride it now." It also just happens to be his favorite ride in the park.

Along the main midway of Cedar Point is a new shop called Sweet Spot. The large store brings a new look to the interior with a striped ceiling and colorful lighting. A wide array of candies, caramel apples and chocolate dipped confections can tempt even those with the strongest willpower. While many of the items such as homemade fudge and hand dipped caramel apples are made there on property, a huge assortment of taffy and bulk candy let people also hand pick the favorites they personally like.

Thrill-seekers, resort guests, companies and the general guests have something to enjoy in 2015. With numerous makeovers this season, many of which are solid revenue producers, Cedar Point is now poised to launch even bigger successes in the future.



# Diggerland's newest attraction makes USA debut

WEST BERLIN, N.J. — A fleet of amphibious eight-wheeled black-and-yellow vehicles, otherwise known as Argos, may be a rare site to see in the United States. Perhaps more rare, would be children and their families operating the all-terrain machines on an off road course.

Diggerland USA made this possible while unveiling their 25th attraction, following the World's Fastest Backhoe and JCB WorkMax UTVs that were introduced earlier in the theme park's second season.

"The Argo furthers our goal of providing one-of-a-kind entertainment for families visiting our park," said Yan Girlya, co-owner of Diggerland USA. "Diggerland is the only place in America where kids and their families can operate heavy equipment; and now we're the only place you can get behind the controls of an Argo."

The construction-themed adventure park covers 14 acres of centrally-located land in Camden County, N.J. and offers visitors the opportunity to oper-



**On June 19, Diggerland introduced its newest interactive vehicle for guests to try their hand at the eight-wheeled all-terrain vehicle from Argo. This is the second year for the interactive park. COURTESY DIGGERLAND USA MARKETING**

ate full size excavators, dumper trucks, and backhoes among a range of other heavy machinery in a safe, family-friendly environment.

Guests began operating the Argos on June 19 as Diggerland is in daily operation through Labor Day for the summer. The newest attraction seats four people; three guests and an operator and is driven along a fixed course in the park.

"We are always looking

to add new attractions to our park," said Ilya Girlya, co-owner of Diggerland USA. "We instantly knew the Argo was a must-have. It's like nothing we've ever seen before and we're very excited to give our guests the chance to drive them."

Diggerland will also serve as a vendor for rentals and purchases of Argos. For more information on Argo sales and rentals, visit: [UTVMasters.com](http://UTVMasters.com)



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# INTERNATIONAL

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## Iceland's Tayto Park opens new Gravity Group wooden coaster

AT: Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

CO. MEATH, Ireland — Tayto Park in Ireland has opened another major attraction in the shape of the Cú Chulainn wooden roller coaster.

Said to be Europe's largest wooden coaster and the first with an inversion, the ride was designed and built by the Gravity Group based in Ohio, U.S., with construction beginning in August 2014. The official opening, which took place in June, was carried out by park owner Raymond Coyle alongside 11-year-old Cian Harty from the Share a Dream organization, who's dream has always been to ride a roller coaster.

"We are so thrilled to officially open the Cú Chulainn coaster," Raymond Coyle said. "The work and planning that has gone into this project started as an idea many years ago, so to see it finally stand here at just over 32 meters high, is a real privilege. We are aiming to give our visitors the very best experience that they can have at Tayto Park and our investment in our attractions this year will hopefully entice people from Ireland and abroad to visit Co. Meath. We believe in Tayto Park and we absolutely believe that it stands alone in Ireland when offering all day entertainment and value for families and people of all ages."

The ride has used over 800,000 kgs of yellow pine wood and reaches a maximum height of 32.05 meters (105 feet), with a highest drop of 31 meters (102 feet). With two, 24-seat trains, Cú Chu-

Tayto Park's new Cú Chulainn coaster was designed and built by the Gravity Group based in Ohio, U.S. It takes rides to a height of 32.05 meters (105 feet) as is part of a €26 million (U.S. \$29 million) investment in 2015. COURTESY TAYTO PARK

lainn will carry up to 1,000 guests per hour at speeds of up to 100 kmh (62 mph) along the 1,082 meter (3,550 foot) long track.

Lead roller coaster designer from The Gravity Group, Korey Kiepert said: "This is the first project we have worked on in Ireland and we're so excited to have created Europe's largest wooden roller coaster and the first with an inversion. We were so impressed with the concept of the wooden roller coaster and the Irish mythological theme for Cú Chulainn that we really wanted to create something spectacular in Tayto Park. The sound and the scale of this roller coaster will impress all visitors to Tayto Park."

The coaster is part of a €26 million (U.S. \$29 million) investment in the park in 2015 which includes several other new rides, attractions and facilities. Among these are the Air Race, Sky Tower and Leap Frog from Zamperla, the Rotator from SBF Visa, a 5D cinema from Simworx, a tracked steam train from Severn Lamb and a three carriage road train from Green Rhino Leisure. There is also a new dinosaur exhibition, new food outlets and a new admissions center.





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## INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

**DreamPlay by DreamWorks opens in Manila**

MANILA, Philippines — The world's first DreamWorks-themed, indoor interactive play and creativity center, **DreamPlay by DreamWorks**, celebrated its official opening on June 12 at City of Dreams Manila to great fanfare involving excited children and beloved DreamWorks animated characters, together with a stellar line-up of VIP celebrity parents.

**Lawrence Ho**, co-chairman and CEO of **Melco Crown Entertainment** was joined by DreamWorks Animation Chief Executive Officer **Jeffrey Katzenberg**, in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to formally open the family entertainment destination.

The DreamPlay center is a first-of-its-kind environment where kids can play and participate in a wide range of creative activities and fun-filled experiences with the characters of DreamWorks Animation's world-famous films, including *Kung Fu Panda*, *Shrek*, *Madagascar* and *How to Train Your Dragon*.

**IMG World's of Adventure opening nears**

DUBAI, U.A.E. — **IMG Worlds of Adventure**, owned by the **Ilyas & Mustafa Galadari Group** (IMG), is Dubai's first mega themed entertainment destination promising visitors from around the world the excitement of four epic adventures in one epic location.

Two of IMG Worlds of Adventure's four zones represent renowned global brands **Cartoon Network** and **Marvel Entertainment**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company. The remaining two zones, IMG Boulevard and the Lost Valley - Dinosaur Adventure are original concepts by IMG. Opening later this year, IMG Worlds of Adventure will be the largest temperature controlled indoor themed entertainment destination in the world, covering an area in excess of 1.5 million square feet. With the capacity to welcome more than 20,000 guests a day, IMG Worlds of Adventure will feature a unique array of adrenaline-pumping roller coasters, thrill rides and spine-tingling attractions based on popular Cartoon Network characters, iconic Marvel Super Heroes and hair-raising dinosaurs.

IMG has been busy working with **Falcon's Creative Group** to create the Avengers: Battle of Ultron attraction which will blend stereoscopic 3D media with an elaborate physical environment and special effects to bring the Marvel Universe to life. Falcon's Creative Group also provided the master plan for the indoor themed entertainment area.

**Malaysia theme park to use acceso**

PERAK, Malaysia — **acceso Technology Group**, a technology solutions provider to the global attractions and leisure industry, has signed a five-year deal with Malaysia's newest theme park, **Movie Animation Park Studios** (MAPS), to install its patented smartphone-based queuing solution — QsmartSM.

Scheduled to open in Perak, Malaysia by mid 2016, MAPS will feature more than 40 rides, shows and attractions including the world's first DreamWorks-dedicated zone, Malaysia's tallest drop tower, and a thrilling live-action car stunt show.

"Our park is purposely-built for mobile connectivity which made incorporating the industry's most advanced queueless technology, Qsmart, a necessity for us to provide to our guests," said MAPS Chief Executive Officer **Darren McLean**.

**Animation Theme Park Sdn Bhd** is the developer, owner and operator of Movie Animation Park Studios, Asia's first animation theme park.

**Vietnam's largest FEC reaches early capacity**

HELIO CENTER, Vietnam — Vietnam's largest family entertainment center, **Helio Center**, opened early February 2015 in Da Nang and has already experienced impressive attendance in their first months of operation. The 157,000 square foot facility, designed by U.S. firm **White Hutchinson Leisure and Learning Group**, offers guests a variety of activities for all ages in both indoor and outdoor environments. Included in the product mix is a Ballocity play structure, supplied by **WhiteWater Attractions**, which stands over 21 feet tall and offers three levels of exploration with a highly interactive "arena" in the center.

## CAVU Designwerks lands first contract

HONG KONG — CAVU Designwerks has just been awarded a multi-million dollar contract for one of its next generation attractions by a major theme park in South East Asia.

A new global attraction provider, CAVU will build a family oriented coaster for the park, with installation planned for late 2016.

Based in Victoria, B.C., Canada, the CAVU Designwerks team includes: Peter R. Schnabel, CEO; Daryl White, president; Tao Huai, president, Asia; Cindy Kwok, vice president, sales; Francine Schnabel, marketing director and



Sue Bohle, public relations.

The company offers six theatres and dark ride media based attractions, each designed to take guests on a unique adventure. They include:

Theatres: FreeFlight (flying theatre); Midnight Express (touring simulator shuttle) and Midnight Excursion (mobile, open topped shuttle).

Dark Rides: Storm Chaser (multi-axis dark ride); Road Racer (action dark ride) and Twist 'N Shoot (interactive gaming ride).

CAVU Designwerks provides next generation media-based theatres and dark rides for a variety of entertainment applications. The company's original attraction designs, engineering experience and cutting edge fabrication systems, combined with uncompromising quality standards, allows CAVU to offer attractions that deliver exceptional guest experience, ride performance and ROI.

• [www.cavudw.com](http://www.cavudw.com)

Asian Attractions Expo 2015 sets records  
8,500 participants  
from 74 countries  
attend annual expo

HONG KONG — Asian Attractions Expo (AAE) 2015 attracted an estimated 8,500 total participants; broke records for the size of the trade show floor and number of exhibitors; delivered information-packed education programs; and featured sold-out networking events at Hong Kong-area attractions. Asian Attractions Expo, which is organized by the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), took place at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, June 16-19.

Based on preliminary estimates, a total of 8,500 people participated in the show from 74 countries, including 6,100 buyers. This is the second highest number of participants in AAE history and represents 65 percent and 91 percent increases, respectively, when compared to the last time the Expo was in Hong Kong (2012). Owners, executives, managers, and leaders from the region's theme parks, water parks, family entertainment centers, zoos, aquariums, museums, science centers, and resorts, as well as a number of developers and investors, participated in Asian Attractions Expo 2015.

A record 353 exhibiting companies filled 9,432 net square meters of space on the trade show floor. Exhibitors came from 40 nations and showcased the latest innovations for the attractions

industry, including high-tech multiple-dimension motion simulators, roller coasters of all shapes and sizes, next-generation video game concepts, immersive themed design elements and services, interactive water slides, and much more.

The IAAPA Institute for Attractions Managers, hosted by Ocean Park Hong Kong, sold out, while the IAAPA Safety Institute was also well attended. The education conference at AAE featured industry leaders from around the world who addressed topics including: what's new in Asia, implementing effective human resources strategies, creating risk management programs, developing a business recovery strategy, launching a corporate social responsibility program, leveraging brands, media-based attractions, and destination marketing.

IAAPA President and CEO

Paul Noland was pleased with AAE 2015: "As we move Asian Attractions Expo to different cities around Asia, we appreciate the unique dynamics of each location. The successful show here in Hong Kong illustrates the strength of the industry throughout the entire Asia-Pacific region."

"This is an amazing industry and it has been great to see operators and suppliers from around the world gather here in Hong Kong," said IAAPA Vice President, Asia-Pacific Operations, June Ko. "I've been particularly impressed by the caliber of the education programs and the popularity of the special events. Clearly, there is a thirst for more industry knowledge and everyone enjoys connecting with their peers and colleagues from throughout the Asia-Pacific region and from around the globe."

**Shanghai to host Asian Attractions Expo 2016**

SHANGHAI, China — The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) announced Asian Attractions Expo (AAE) 2016 will take place at the Shanghai New International Expo Center (SNIEC) June 13-16, 2016. IAAPA, the trade association for the attractions industry worldwide, produces the annual Expo.

"We are thrilled to take Asian Attractions Expo back to China," said IAAPA President and CEO Paul Noland. "We selected Shanghai, one of the most established business centers in China, as it is reflective of the tremendous international appeal of our industry to the Asia-Pacific region and the industry's dynamic growth."

"Shanghai has grown exponentially over the past 15 years, and is home to some exciting new industry projects," said IAAPA Vice President, Asia Pacific Operations June Ko. "The city is a perfect location to bring our international attendees and exhibitors to learn, buy, and network."



# Germany's Holiday Park adds Gerstlauer Sky Fly

AT: Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

HASSLOCH, Germany — Holiday Park Plopsa in Germany has continued its investment program in 2015 with the addition of a new Sky Fly ride from Gerstlauer which made its debut on July 1.

Called Sky Fly by the park, this latest addition caters to riders from 1.25 meters (4 feet) in height and allows patrons — or pilots — to control the movements of their winged gondolas via two joystick style levers on either side of their seat, and thus control the thrill level. In doing so, the interactive experience can range from one of relatively sedate swoops and dives to lots of adrenaline pumping loops and roll overs. According to the park, Sky Fly therefore fits perfectly to the venue's target groups.

Installed at a cost of €2 million, the attraction is situated in an aerodrome setting (the full theming of which will

be completed in 2016) and incorporates a theme of flying. It features 12 gondolas on one end of a pivotal arm, has a radius of 30 meters (98 feet) and reaches a height of 22 meters (72 feet). Ride time is approximately two minutes and 40 seconds.

The latest addition to Holiday Park Plopsa is located in one of the major squares of the park, on a direct route between the Viking Village and the "Sky Scream" zone, and is "the perfect addition to our existing portfolio," according to park manager Bernd Beitz, who also commented: "When I see the reactions of the first passengers, our new attraction definitively met the taste of our visitors. For us it's important to fulfill alternately the wishes of both the thrill fans and the guests who prefer smooth family rides. With Sky Fly we succeed in meeting the ideas of both visitor groups."

"With steady and innovative investment we raise



A variety of different actions can be enjoyed on Holiday Park's new Sky Fly ride by Gerstlauer. The motion on each gondola on Sky Fly is operated by the rider via two joystick levers, as seen above.

COURTESY  
HOLIDAY PARK PLOPSA

Holiday Park's attractivity each season," he continued. "Thanks to the new coaster in 2014 and Sky Fly in 2015, we also expect high visitor numbers for this season."



## KidZania London creates new child-friendly experience in U.K.

AT: Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

LONDON, U.K. — KidZania London opened its doors in June, marking the debut of the first experience of its kind in the U.K.

To celebrate the official opening, KidZania Global President Xavier López Ancona joined KidZania London Chairman Joel Cadbury to welcome 300 enthusiastic local children who charged onto the streets of the child-size city to sample what is on offer.

According to the company, KidZania London "is set to change the way children enjoy education and entertainment." Designed to empower children, KidZania gives youngsters the confidence to challenge themselves and inspires them to explore the world of opportunities, with each unique role-play crafted to ensure they learn essential life-skills including financial literacy, teamwork and independence.

KidZania London Chairman Joel Cadbury said: "KidZania London will be an experience like no other. Throughout its development we have gone to



extraordinary lengths to ensure the city is as authentic and true to the real-world as possible, working with an incredible group of industry partners and talented content creators to build a city that we truly believe will alter the way the U.K. views education and entertainment, opening the eyes of future generations to a myriad of possibilities they may have otherwise never known existed."

KidZania Global President Xavier López Ancona, commented: "We are delighted to open the doors to what is now the nineteenth KidZania to open interna-

tionally. KidZania London will be the European flagship for KidZania and it is only today, when you see the final city, that it is possible to gauge the scale and potential impact it will have on its visitors."

A real-life introduction to the world of work for children aged 4 to 14, KidZania London offers youngsters the opportunity to learn over 60 unique and exciting professions, from surgeons and fashion stylists to cabin crew and hotel receptionists. On entering the city, kids find the streets lined with a host of real-world establishments, including a



Above left, On the Radio at KidZania London. Above, KidZania London Chairman Joel Cadbury in the Aviation Academy. Below, Young dentists in training at KidZania London. COURTESY KIDZANIA LONDON

hospital, police station, fire station, airline and theatre, each offering real-life role play adventures in a fun and safe environment.

Built over the past year, the 75,000 square foot child-size city is the equivalent in size to Leicester Square, with the ceiling height of Heathrow Terminal Five. Capable of accommodating up to 1,700 visitors at any one time, KidZania London is forecast to welcome 750,000 guests in its first year.





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# WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► Castaway Cove debuts WhiteWater AquaLoop — Page 14

## Waldameer & Water World open the tri-state area's largest wave pool

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ERIE, Pa. — Paul Nelson is a man who knows where he is going. The CEO of Waldameer Park & Water World has a vision for the properties' future. He's not shy about sharing with the public either. Nelson has found his water park visitors are some of his best customers. In addition to the water park being a significant driver for attendance during the summer season, he enjoys the family dynamic involved while enjoying the water attractions. The park has just launched a three year expansion to Water World.

On June 9, the facility debuted its new wave pool to the public and the media. The temperature was 61 degrees. Despite the less-than-auspicious weather conditions, the park was ready for this to be a big deal for the area. Billed as the largest wave pool in the tri-state region, the new attraction was an enormous addition to the property, causing them to pave over part of an existing parking lot and expand it into land they had recently acquired. Completely visible to those guests arriving from the Peninsula Drive entrance to the park, the giant wave pool should excite loyal fans before they even get out of the car.

Grassy areas around the pool remove any feel of the attraction just being placed in a parking lot. The wave pool is just Phase I of a three year expansion in that area. The park is not keeping further developments under wraps either. Signage depicting Phase II and Phase III are installed adjacent to the wave pool to keep guests excited about

what's coming next. *Amusement Today* asked President and General Manager Steve Gorman why make the wave pool the first phase. "We felt that is what we needed the most. That is because it would have the most capacity," said Gorman. Phase II will be children centered with ProSlide attractions, and Phase III will have a family-oriented water play structure.

The well documented harsh winter was certain to make an impact on the project. Gorman tells AT, "The extreme cold at times were zero or 10-degrees below zero. We had a lot of guys out there and give them a lot of credit for doing that. But the winter did make the job take longer. It was more costly, taking money, obviously, to heat things." He adds, "It was probably two weeks behind in opening. It probably cost us \$300,000 — \$400,000 more because of the harsh winter."

When the park decided to utilize the land from an unpaved parking lot for the expansion, that area was sloped terrain. Cleverly using their resources, Gorman reports, "We had to raise the level of about two acres about three feet. After the excavation of the wave pool, we took all that soil and spread it around the two acres to raise that land."

This expansion brought in new nicely done restrooms, new lockers, and a large new food facility. Elsewhere in the park, lockers were expanded and the bathhouses enlarged closer to the entrance of Water World. Nelson told AT, "We're going to add cabanas. We won't charge what the other places charge. We plan



Waldameer's Water World opened the first of three expansions this summer by adding this beautiful clock and second entrance gate (above and above right) and the Giant Wave Pool (right). Aquatic Development Group, ProSlide, Wave Tek and Neptune Benson worked together to create the massive water attraction. AT/TIM BALDWIN

to give our season pass holders half price discounts in the middle of the week." Another nice touch was the addition of a beautiful clock in the expanded area, a detail so often missing in most water parks.

The enlargement of the property has also caused some other improvements indirectly. Because entrances are on both sides, colorful new ticket booths are now placed on each side of the park instead of just one central location within Waldameer. "We've gone from six cashier stations to sixteen," says Gorman, "and both admission facilities have express lines for people with pre-paid tickets. All they need is our wristbands." In addition, with the



paving of the east parking lot this season, controlling water runoff during rain became essential. Being proactive, the park installed a drainage system that runs under the park from one side to the other to properly drain in the most efficient way — a significant investment to be sure, both in terms of cost and practicality.

Atypically, the park opted not to create an elaborate name for the attraction; it is simply Giant Wave Pool. Because of its size, a more modern approach to a wave pool was a design they had seen done at Holiday World & Splashin' Safari in Santa Claus, Ind., which juts a concrete "peninsula" into the center of the pool. "The advan-

tage to having a split wave pool is that on a slow day we can close one side of the pool with a buoy rope saving on lifeguard staffing and electricity by not having to run the wave equipment on that side. Plus, the lifeguard area stationed on that peninsula is more in the center of the pool which gives them much more control of the pool with less distance to reach someone."

The partners involved with the wave pool expansion: Aquatic Development Group was the designer of the wave pool; ProSlide helped with the master plan; Wave Tek for wave generation equipment; Neptune Benson (Rhode Island) for fil-

► See WALDAMEER, page 12



Bermuda Quadrangle at Adventureland, USA

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## WhiteWater celebrates over 100 completed projects in Asia

RICHMOND, B.C., Canada — WhiteWater West, one of the first water park manufacturers to dive head-first into the Asian amusement market, recently announced the completion of more than 100 Asian projects throughout the region.

During the last 35 years, WhiteWater has been designing, manufacturing, installing and servicing world-renowned facilities, through its in-house team, for clients all over China, Thailand, Japan and Korea.

"There are many success stories to see when you look at WhiteWater. We're proud to be able to offer our clients the complete package of design to manufacturing, installation and beyond. The concept to completion model is an aspect of our business that sets us apart within the industry," commented Geoff Chutter, President & CEO, WhiteWater.

"An impressive WhiteWater project that stands out from the crowds is Chimelong Waterpark, a world-renowned destination that is known for redefining the standard for water parks in China and for surpassing Disney's attendance numbers in 2013. After breaking ground in Guangzhou, China in 2007, Chimelong Waterpark, built with amazing amenities and water park products, went on to receive numerous awards from IAAPA and TripAdvisor for its water park excellence. WhiteWater has been successfully helping other clients throughout Asia elevate their entertainment quality to exceed their guest's expectations ever since," Chutter said.

WhiteWater has worked with the largest companies in Asia to develop world-class attractions and entertainment facilities. WhiteWater's key clients include Samsung Everland, Wanda Dalian Group, OCT Group, Chimelong Group, Waterbom, DaeMyung Leisure Industries, Ltd., Happy Magic Water Cube, and Lotte World.

## ►WALDAMEER Continued from page 11

tration; Taylor and Associates for lounge chairs; American Locker for locker installation. Phase II and Phase III will involve ProSlide attractions so pumps, pipes and installations for them were incorporated into this Phase I construction.

Despite uncertain times in the past decade, Waldameer has seen a successful period of growth. "We feel we have created a niche where we have a very affordable family attraction — family owned, family operated and we try to draw families," says Gorman. "We have a lot of local families in our area that if they cannot afford a season pass, they can have free admission to the park or use our picnic shelters, or come in and buy an ice cream cone or take one ride. There is a different budget range for different people. We are starting to market further out and grow our attractions base, grow our water park." With their eyes on the future, Nelson, Gorman and the Waldameer team clearly have things well in hand.



Alongside this season's addition of the Giant Wave Pool and nearby cabanas, Waldameer's Water World added the new Waveside Grill, new restrooms, lockers from American Locker, lounge chairs and other furniture from Taylor and Associates. AT/TIM BALDWIN



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## NEWS SPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

**Polin Waterparks'** Super Combo Waterslide won a 2015 MVP Award from *Aquatics International* magazine. The magazine's readers vote for the Most Valuable Products annually and narrow down the contenders to the 25 best new products of the year.

"Our designers are perfectionists when it comes to developing state-of-the-art slides that pump up your adrenaline while also being incredibly safe. So being able to build on our painstaking investment in these products' development and create completely new products for our customers and their guests is win-win-win for all of us. Our designers are elated to see their creations — which are already proven popular and successful — gain even greater use and longevity. Our clients are happy because their ongoing challenge is to find new ways to keep customers coming back, which is a real advantage of our hybrid/combination offerings. And, of course, guests are on cloud nine to discover new and even more thrilling rides," says **Ali Cansun**, R&D manager, Polin.

The development of hybrid attractions allows Polin to offer multiple and even more exciting slide paths, along with unexpected G-force changes. Specifically, in regards to the Super Combo, Polin has combined four rides into one, including Polin's Sphere. The Sphere rockets riders into a dark, orbital-shaped slide that loops around several times before riders make a splash landing. Because of the Super Combo's unique ride path, no ride is ever the same, making it exciting for guests to ride again and again. Super Combo is first installed at **Aquafantasy Waterpark** in Izmir, Turkey.

**Wild Waters** water park at **Silver Springs State Park**, Florida, is enjoying newfound success due to an \$800,000 investment from **BG Capital Group**. The park had been thrilling Florida residents for more than 35 years, but when the Silver Springs recreation area became a state park, Wild Waters was on the chopping block.

After plans to close the park were announced, public outcry caused an advisory committee to look for outside operators. In 2014, 12 operators expressed an interest in running the park, even as the **Florida Department of Environmental Protection** was making plans to dismantle a two-person raft bowl slide that was installed at the park in 2008. Of the 12 investors, BG Capital was chosen, and that company in turn hired **Arden Tilghman** as president of **Silver Springs Management**.

In June, **WaveGarden** announced a strategic partnership with **Leitner Ropeways** of Italy. Pooling the two company's top electrical, mechanical, civil and computational fluid dynamic (CFD) engineers, led to the development a new gearless drive system, **DirectDrive**. The new drive system plays a key role in the development of perfect artificial waves for surfing. The new drive system propels the submerged wavefoil from one end of the lagoon to another, to produce a series of perfect waves that range from three feet to almost six feet.

**Great Wolf Lodge Poconos**, Scotrun, Pa., has jumped on the Slideboarding bandwagon. Working with **WhiteWater**, Great Wolf converted an existing tube slide into a slideboarding attraction by adding digital LED light bands to the slide and new rafts equipped with a video game controller. The slide is so popular that a second conversion is already underway with that slide expected to open mid-August. In addition to the Pocono property, **Great Wolf Lodge Williamsburg** is also in the process of converting an existing slide with a rollout expected later this year.

**Susie Storey**, director of communications for **Great Wolf Resorts**, said that although there are no immediate plans to add slideboarding to the remaining Great Wolf properties, "it's still very early in this water game."

Slideboarding was tested at **Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas** during last year's **WWA** expo. Wet'n'Wild debuted the first permanent installation earlier this year.

# Castaway Cove debuts AquaLoop

WICHITA FALLS, Texas — Castaway Cove, the city-owned water park here, officially became the first Texas park to offer the AquaLoop attraction to patrons when it opened its doors for the 2015 season in May 9.

The park has named the attraction **Pirate's Plunge**. It was manufactured by **WhiteWater West**. Kent Lemasters, president and CEO, AmusementAquatic Management, which manages Castaway Cove for the city, said the attraction has been very well received.

Castaway Cove experienced some operational loss time due to record setting May rains. Wichita Falls reported 17 inches of rain that month.

**Pirate's Plunge** stands 60 feet tall. Riders walk to the top where they enter a launch capsule. The floor of the capsule drops out and riders go into a 37-foot vertical free fall accelerating up to a speed of 40 mph and reaching 59 feet per second as they make the 360-degree diagonal loop.



These four cabanas were refurbished adjacent to the park's activity pool. AT/GARY SLADE

The translucent water slide allows spectators to watch riders. The **SilkTek** translucent flume comes in several colors such as red, yellow, blue, green and clear. Castaway Cove chose green as their color of choice.

The acrylic launch capsule also provides riders with a view right before the free fall.

Castaway Cove's AquaLoop actually was set to open for the 2014 season. But, because the area was under a Stage 5 drought and water was

being hauled to the park, it was felt waiting on the opening was a better idea. The spring rains has brought Wichita Falls out of drought conditions.

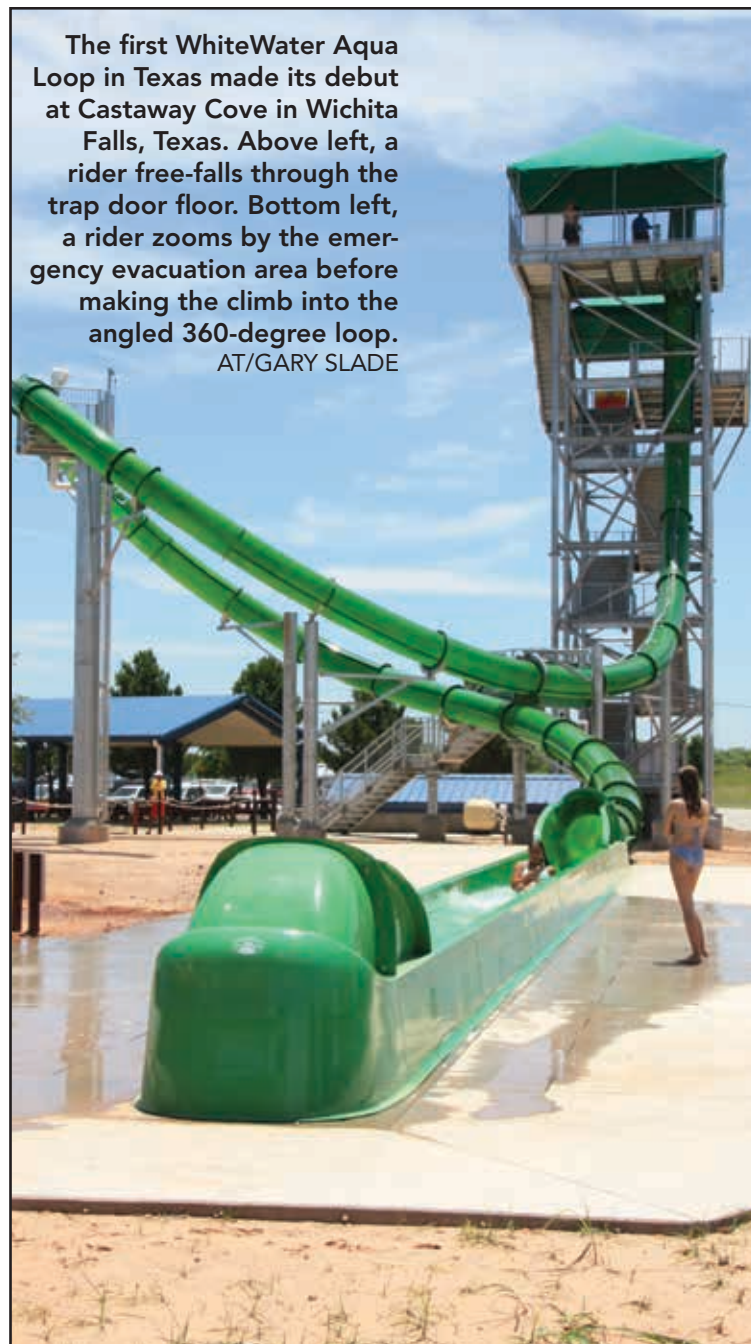
Also new this season, the park refurbished four cabanas adjacent to its activity pool. The cabanas rent for \$40 on week days and \$60 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The park has 10 total cabanas and 2 group cabanas that accommodate 24 people each.

—Pam Sherborne



The first **WhiteWater Aqua Loop** in Texas made its debut at **Castaway Cove** in **Wichita Falls, Texas**. Above left, a rider free-falls through the trap door floor. Bottom left, a rider zooms by the emergency evacuation area before making the climb into the angled 360-degree loop.

AT/GARY SLADE





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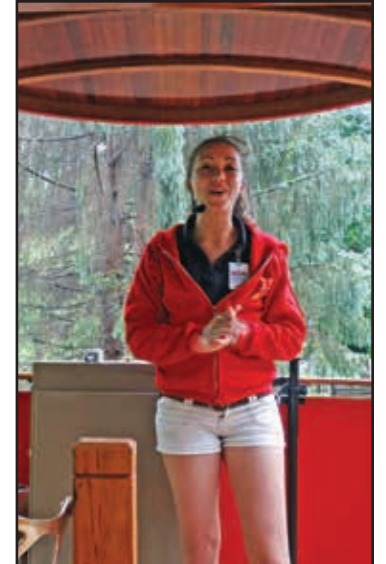
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# PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

▶ **Fast & Furious super-charges Universal's famed Studio Tour — Page 24 / Fairs — Pages 28-34**



Idlewild has retooled its popular Mister Rogers Neighborhood of Make Believe into Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood Trolley Ride. The trolleys received a complete makeover (left) to go with the new storyline and new characters (above), presented to trolley riders by a dedicated group of trolley drivers. TROLLEY COURTESY IDLEWILD; AT/TIM BALDWIN

## Idlewild takes trolley ride to next evolution with Daniel Tiger

**AT:** Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

LIGONIER, Pa. — When Idlewild announced the closure of Mister Rogers Neighborhood of Make Believe, there was an emotional outpouring from many of the park's guests devoted to the trolley ride. Originally built in 1989, it took passengers on a 14-minute ride through scenes with characters based on the show produced by the Fred Rogers Company. For 25 seasons, Idlewild & SoakZone was the only place anyone could experience just such an attraction.

Fred Rogers was a native of southern Pennsylvania, so he remembered trips to Idlewild when he was younger. He founded his company in 1971 and produced many episodes for PBS. The programing addressed social, emotional and behavioral health in children while supporting parents, caregivers and teachers in their work with children. It was a natural fit for Rogers to partner with Idlewild. As many children grew up watching *Mister Rogers Neighborhood*, they also grew up with the park, which is now celebrating its 138th season. Now with children of their own, it is bittersweet for a treasured attraction to be retired.

However, this season introduces Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood Trolley Ride. Not just a makeover, this is more of an evolution of the previous ride. It incorporates characters from the PBS preschool show *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood*. For those not in the know, this new program centers on characters that are children of the original characters of *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood* show. It currently is the No. 1 ranked children's show in households with kids under four years old. It has won two Parents Choice Awards in the two seasons it has aired on PBS.

Jeff Croushore, public relations manager for Idlewild, explains, "The new show features four-year-old Daniel Tiger, who is the son of Daniel Striped Tiger from the original Mr. Rogers show when they went to the Neighborhood of Make Believe. It features Daniel and his childhood friends, but it still features characters from the show we all grew up with. It shows what happens in real life; one generation grows up and another generation comes along." He adds, "The trolley is the connecting thread between the two shows."



**Croushore**

AT asked if it was more of a decision from the park to pull the curtain on the original attraction or the people at the Fred Rogers Company. Croushore answers, "It ended up being a joint decision. We approached them if we could somehow build on the success of the new character and bring Daniel Tiger to the park in some capacity. At that time, we weren't looking to close the original ride; that ride was still very popular." He continues, "They did not want to mix the two brands, and we agreed, so we went totally new. With the success of the new character we thought it would be best. We saw at the ride that kids weren't as familiar with the original characters."

The trolleys were repainted and the woodwork has been refinished. The sound system has also been upgraded. Sensors on the track activate audio enhancements to the trolley experience. The Fred Rogers Company felt it would be good to add another feature where children imagine that Daniel is on the ride. The park now feels there is a three-way interaction between the driver, the guests and Dan-


iel's voice on the ride.

Idlewild's stance is that strong personalities are needed to be trolley drivers as the job demands a blend of knowledge of the script, timing and a willing interaction with the children aboard the trolley. The park has a core team of about seven trolley drivers, although other park personnel are trained to be able to give a guided tour. Croushore really praises the dedication of the devoted young drivers on the trolley. He also notes that it is the only ride the park knows of to be a scripted sing-along ride.

The original ride featured the "Hug and Song" storyline, which was developed by Fred Rogers himself. With the new ride, they felt the inclusion of that feature was important to retain. Children and parents can hug and sing together on each journey.

Idlewild turned to Schell Games for the update to the ride. Based in Pittsburgh, the company had previously worked with Disney and Universal among others. Schell Games was the creative consultant with both the park and the Fred Rogers Company, laying out the scenes and what should happen. LifeFormations was also called upon for some of the characters, and the Weber Group worked on some of the scenes. Because the new television show is animated, they wanted the characters to resemble them in that way, instead of the puppets of the original.

In addition to the ride, the park has also introduced a musical stage show that features Daniel Tiger and his friend Katerina Kitty cat. It is performed three times a day in Racoon Lagoon kiddieland and offers visitors a chance for a meet-and-greet following the show.

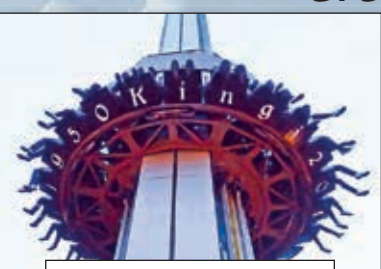


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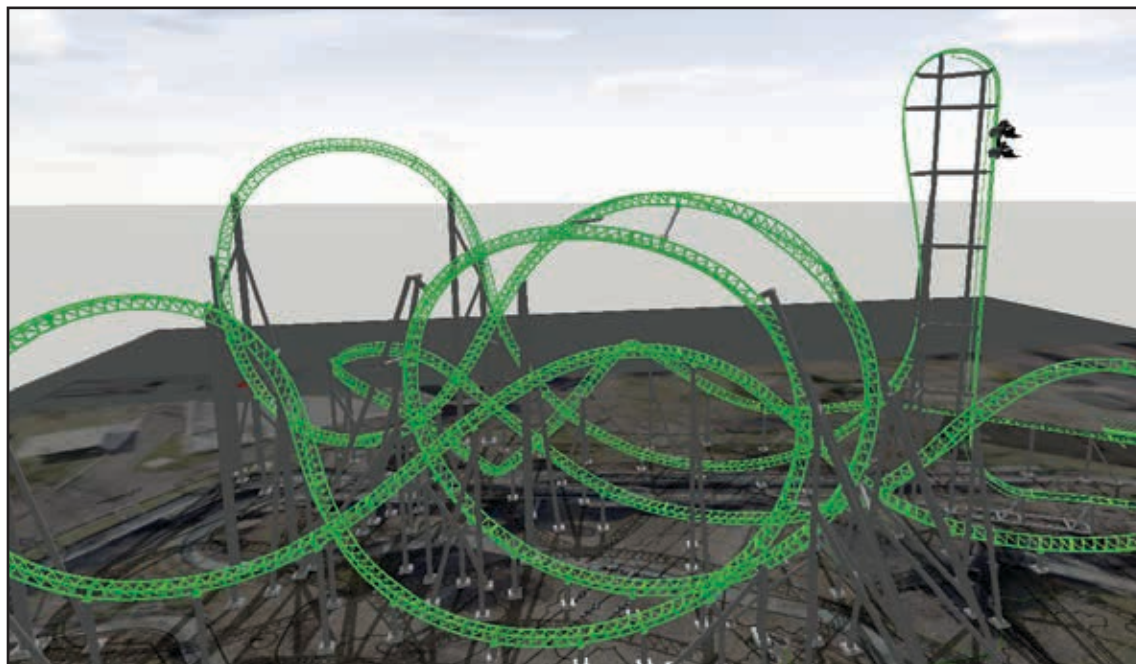
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Germany's Gerstlauer will supply The Monster, a custom-designed looping roller coaster for Adventureland's 2016 season. Standing 133 feet tall, the ride will feature a 101-degree first drop and five inversions along 2,500 feet of track. COURTESY GERSTLAUER



## Adventureland adding coaster, retiring flume

ALTOONA, Iowa — While Adventureland guests are enjoying a warm summer season, park officials are already planning big thrills for next year. They have confirmed that a major steel looping roller coaster dubbed The Monster will be the headliner for the 2016 season.

"We knew we wanted to do something big," said Adventureland's Molly Vincent. "This is going to be something that goes far beyond any other coaster we have at Adventureland now."

To be designed and built by Germany's Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH, The Monster is one of the company's popular compact looping coasters. The new \$9 million ride will feature a 133-foot-tall vertical lift followed by a beyond-vertical (101-degree) 13-story first drop along with five inversions. In addition to boasting 10 moments of weightlessness along 2,500 feet of track, the new coaster will interact with and cross the existing Sky Ride eight times.

AT also spoke about the new coaster with Adam Sandy of Ride Entertainment Group, which represents Gerstlauer. "Gerstlauer and Ride En-

tertainment are very excited to be working with Adventureland on The Monster. It will be exciting and unique — the layout will be like nothing else in the country," said Sandy. "Next year its vertical lift and 101-degree drop will be an icon at the property and offer a ride experience that is guaranteed to thrill riders. We are very excited to see the Negative-G Stall Loop (first used on Gerstlauer's Junker at Power Park in Finland this year) make its debut in the western hemisphere — it is an awesome element."

With the addition of the new coaster, a park classic is being closed. The beloved Log Ride, which has been part of the Adventureland lineup since its debut in 1975, will be removed at the end of the summer season.

In a public statement, Adventureland officials said: "The Log Ride has been a park staple for decades — tens of thousands of photos, screams and splashdowns have been had on this ride, but all great things must eventually come to an end. We know that this was a fan (and personal!) favorite, but we want it to go out on its own terms. We encourage all of our fans to take advantage of this advance knowledge and get in your last ride. The Log Ride is over 40 years old, and while still structurally sound, technology for rides has advanced by leaps and bounds in that time period. It is requiring an enormous amount of upkeep and maintenance that isn't feasible long term. We promise to provide our fans with a suitable replacement, sooner rather than later."

Contrary to various online published reports, AT research had determined that the unique Log Ride was not built by Arrow but a seldom heard of company, Divitron. It features a 45-foot tall lift and provides almost a two minute ride.

While the Log Ride will be retired after Labor Day weekend, construction of The Monster will begin soon with a scheduled opening in June 2016.

—Scott Rutherford and Gary Slade



Adventureland's Log Ride will be retired after Labor Day. A product of Divitron, the unique Log Ride has been cooling guests off since 1975, but has now reached the end of its operating life due to increased maintenance and upkeep. AT FILE/GARY SLADE



# Premier Rides to supply Lake Compounce with triple launch coaster in 2016

BRISTOL / SOUTHTON, Conn. — Lake Compounce Family Theme Park, located in both the towns of Bristol and Southington, announced on July 10 that it will be adding a triple launch roller coaster with linear synchronous motor (LSM) technology to the amusement park in the summer of 2016. This will be the first LSM coaster in the Northeast region of the U.S. Named Phobia Phear Coaster, the ride addresses many popular “phobias” with the ride design and theming including the fear of heights, speed, enclosed spaces, and of course the fear of roller-coasters.

Phobia Phear Coaster, manufactured by Baltimore-based Premier Rides, will feature an inversion at 150 feet in the air which is one of the highest in existence. Guests will experience speeds of 65 mile per hour with many exciting and unique elements including multiple launches, a twisting heart-line inversion, and ascending and descending twists.

Phobia uses magnetic

## FAST FACTS

**Ride Name/Park**  
Phobia Phear Coaster/  
Lake Compounce,  
Bristol/Southington, Conn.

**Ride/Opening**  
Triple launch LSM coaster/  
Summer 2016

**Height/Length/Speed**  
150 feet/850 feet/65 mph

**Vehicle/Hourly Capacity**  
1 train accommodating 12  
riders/450-500 pph

**Footprint**  
215 feet by 62 feet

**Supplier**  
Premier Rides  
Baltimore, Md.

technology that allows the coaster to create its own energy and to store it to use for future launches.

“Adding Phobia to Lake Compounce will launch us to a new level in the amusement park arena by adding another ride that will be enjoyed by our thrill-seeking guests,” said Lake Com-

pounce General Manager Jerry Brick. “Over the past 10 years we have focused on attractions that appeal to the younger end of our family audience and we felt it was time to introduce a new high thrill factor. Phobia will be the largest financial investment we have made to the park in our history and we couldn’t be more excited.”

*Amusement Today* asked Premier Rides President Jim Seay about the project and working with Palace Entertainment again: “Premier Rides is extremely honored to have been selected by Lake Compounce to design and produce such an amazing roller coaster. Phobia Phear Coaster will incorporate our newest technologies including our most advanced magnetic launch system and a highly innovative military based power modulation system that represents cutting edge green technology.

Premier has a very positive long-term relationship with Lake Compounce’s parent organization Palace Entertainment and has supplied multiple rides for their

In 2016 guests at Lake Compounce will be able to experience the Northeast’s only triple launch LSM roller coaster with the opening of Phobia Phear Coaster.  
COURTESY  
LAKE COMPOUNCE



other signature parks such as Kennywood Amusement Park and Idlewild Park. We enjoy working with their talented team. On a personal level, I grew up in Connecti-

cut so Lake Compounce holds a special place for me, and it means a lot to provide an amazing attraction to such a historic park.”

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# Themed Larson Flying Scooter soars over Morey's Piers

AT: Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

WILDWOOD, N.J. — The Morey family realizes that a little nostalgia goes a long way. This season they returned Kong, an iconic boardwalk landmark from early 1970s, to Surfside Pier in the form of a new Flying Scooter from Texas-based Larson International.

Opened to the public on Memorial Day weekend, the new simian-themed ride is situated on an elevated platform and serves as the new centerpiece of Surfside Pier. Kong himself, snorting smoke and fog, is outfitted in an "I love Wildwood" T-shirt and is clutching one of Wildwood's well-known tram cars while hanging from the 60-foot-tall lighthouse at the ride's center. Eight two-seat gondolas with movable forward rudders navigate around the infamous gorilla, allowing riders to climb as high as 26 feet above the pier.

After sunset, Kong lights up the night with a rotating light on top of the lighthouse and enhanced LED lighting outlining the radiating sweeps and the bottoms of each ride vehicle. The lighting package was supplied by Denny's Electronics of Nokomis, Fla.

AT spoke with Will and Jack Morey, second-generation partners of Morey's Piers, about guest reaction to the new attraction as well as their working relationship with Larson International: "Kong is one of the most well-known of all landmarks to grace Morey's Piers over the last five decades, and it was time to



Larson International supplied a new custom-themed Flying Scooter for Kong at Morey's Piers. Located atop an elevated platform, the eight-seat Flying Scooter features a gorilla (Kong) hanging from a 60-foot-tall lighthouse at the ride's center. Kong & Co., a 3000-square-foot retail space is located beneath the ride. The original Kong was an iconic boardwalk landmark from the early 1970s.

AT/TIM BALDWIN; NIGHT COURTSEY MOREY'S PIERS



bring this classic back to life," the Moreys explained. "It might have taken nearly 40 years, a public voting of the masses to finalize the design, at a cost of about \$1.6 million bananas, but

we're thrilled to welcome back Kong to his rightful home on Surfside Pier.

"Our guests love Kong. One of the great things is that so many age brackets enjoy



the ride," the Moreys added. "While Larson has been producing Flying Scooters [since the early 2000s], this particular one was highly customized and themed. This allowed what is essentially a basic and traditional amusement ride to be a real show piece. Larson's Jeff Novotny and his entire team were terrific to work with and we look forward to the possibil-

ity of customizing more of their classics."

The Morey's are masters at stacking rides and attractions; they leave no space unused. Beneath the Flying Scooter is Kong & Co., a new 3,000-square-foot retail space offering cell phone charging stations and comfortable chairs along with frozen chocolate covered bananas and merchandise.

## Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau changes name To "Visit Anaheim"

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau (AOCVCB) recently unveiled its new name, Visit Anaheim ([www.VisitAnaheim.org](http://www.VisitAnaheim.org)).

"A year's worth of brand exploration, consumer meetings and travel trade research told us clearly that we needed a name and brand that is reflective of our organization's mission," said Jay Burrell, president & CEO, Visit Anaheim. "Visit Anaheim is a name that travel enthusiasts and conventioners can easily find and understand. It evokes a sense of discovery and clearly communicates that we have an incredible, awe-inspiring destination that people should come see for themselves."

The second largest city in Orange County, Anaheim has undergone a massive revitalization and beautification effort and is home to some of California's most exciting and prestigious attractions, entertainment and sports venues, theme parks and an exploding foodie culture and brew scene.

—PR Newswire

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## 2015 Golden Ticket Awards Agenda

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### Friday, September 11, 2015

12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

#### **Hotel Arrival and Event Registration\***

Location: Park Lane Hotel, 36 Central Park S., New York City, N.Y. 10019

Pick up Golden Ticket registration and welcome packet including credentials, event schedule, gift bag and more.

\*Late arrivals will be checked in directly at each park location.

6:00 p.m.

#### **Guests are Escorted to Victorian Gardens at Wollman Rink in Central Park**

GTA attendees meet in hotel lobby and begin the short walk to Victorian Gardens for the evening events.

(Guides will be dressed in costumes and will be holding signs to help direct guests.)

6:30 p.m.

#### **Victorian Gardens Cocktail Party Followed by Dinner Reception and Entertainment**

(Roaring 20s themed event with period costumes and Jazz band entertainment.)

Guests are encouraged to get inspired and come adorned in 20s themed attire and accessories.

### Saturday, September 12, 2015

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

#### **Downtown Tour**

Narrated by licensed NYC tour guides who know the city inside and out, this hop on/hop off excursion on a double-decker bus takes you through Greenwich Village, Little Italy, Chinatown, Wall Street and the Financial District, Battery Park City, South Street Seaport, the Lower East Side, along with Rockefeller Center, the United Nations building, Carnegie Hall, the Broadway Theater District and more. Along the way, you'll have the chance to explore the streets, visit the shops and enjoy a vast array of authentic cuisines.

Hop on/hop off passes will be provided to each guest upon request — tour length 2 hours (without hopping on and off).

Tours will depart across the street from the Park Lane Hotel.

3:00 p.m.

#### **Board Private GTA Shuttle Bus to Luna Park, Coney Island 4:00 p.m. Arrival**

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

#### **Free Exploration and Rides Opportunities**

GTA credentials will be provided for access to all rides and activities.

6:00 p.m.

#### **Pre-Award Cocktail Party on the famous Coney Island Boardwalk**

Location: Place to Beach, 1301 Boardwalk W., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224.

7:00 p.m.

#### **Guests Walk One Block to Gargiulo's Restaurant**

7:30 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.

#### **2015 Golden Ticket Award Presentation**

Location: Gargiulo's Restaurant, 2911 W. 15th Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224

Awards will be in conjunction with a formal sit down dinner featuring a "Golden Age of Coney Island" theme.

Entertainment provided by RWS &amp; Associates.

10:00 p.m.

#### **GTA Attendees Begin Walk Back to Coney Island Boardwalk for Private Viewing of Fireworks Beginning at 10:30 p.m.**

Following fireworks, attendees will board private GTA shuttle buses back to the Park Lane Hotel.



# Hollywood trams roll to a heart-racing ride film finish

## Fast & Furious super-charges Universal's famed Studio Tour

AT: Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — The latest *Fast & Furious* movie sequel sensation isn't the film that wowed many critics and thundered to a \$1 billion-plus worldwide box office haul this past spring. It's *Fast & Furious — Supercharged*, a new attraction at Universal Studios Hollywood (USH).

Serving as the new climax of the park's famous Studio Tour, the cutting-edge ride film experience, featuring *Fast & Furious* series cast members Vin Diesel, Dwayne Johnson, Michelle Rodriguez, Tyrese Gibson and Luke Evans, catapults guests into the high-stakes underground world of street racing at perceived speeds of 120 miles per hour.

USH opened the attraction to the public June 24 following a red carpet media roll-out the day before.

"*Fast & Furious* is an exhilarating global film phenomenon that has been consistently characterized as a thrill ride.



An explosive car stunt (left) introduced *Fast & Furious — Supercharged*, the new grand finale of the Universal Studios Hollywood Studio Tour, to the media on June 23. Trams enter a specially-constructed soundstage housing the hydraulic motion-based attraction, which features a 360-degree screen stretching 400 feet.

COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

Now we can officially say it is," said Larry Kurzweil, president of USH, at the preview. "As [the park's] epic transformation continues as part of our 50th anniversary, we are thrilled to bring Universal's incredibly compelling film franchise to life."

A hydraulic motion-based ride that is similar to, but larger and considerably more advanced than, the King Kong attraction added to the Studio



Tour in 2010, *Fast & Furious — Supercharged* delivers an original storyline as it fuses sophisticated atmospheric effects with a state-of-the-art 3D audio system and 3D-HD imagery projected onto the world's most expansive 360-degree screen.

The high-tech screen, spanning nearly 400 feet in length within a new 65,000-square-foot soundstage on the legendary backlot, uses a system of 34 projectors to immerse Studio Tour guests in a scene packed with wild car stunts.

*Fast & Furious* actually begins the moment visitors board the Studio Tour. Tram monitors play exclusive filmed content with cast members that engage passengers en route to the actual ride. Numerous prop cars from the *Fast & Furious* films build the narrative both on the tram's course and at the ride's soundstage location. It's all a warm-up for the action to come.

Working along with 3-D glasses, a number of fully synchronized "4-D" effects, such as smoke, fans and water sprayers, enhance the realism of the show — which is highlighted by simulated explosions and all manner of automotive mayhem.

"There are so many in-



**"*Fast & Furious* is a global film phenomenon that has been characterized as a thrill ride. Now we can say it is."**

—Larry Kurzweil, President  
Universal Studios Hollywood

credible stunts in the films themselves, so we felt we had to somehow top that," said USH executive show producer Chick Russell to *The Orange County Register* in June. Russell and his creative team, which included the screenwriters from the movies, came up with a few brand-new vehicular tricks while developing a fresh scenario for the six-minute ride — taking pains to ensure that guests on each of the tram's four cars have a unique perspective.

"Some people might say there's too much going on, but we love too much going on," Russell said. "[You] can come back multiple times and each time it can be like a whole new experience."

After hopping aboard the trams to check out *Fast & Furious*, the featured actors clearly were impressed by the attraction.

"It's super cool!" raved Vin Diesel. "It's not like anything I've ever seen. Everyone on the tram said, 'Can we do it again?' This is new territory for us... to create something as immortal and immersive as this... that all the fans of our franchise can actually live through and be a part of."

"It's an amazing experience," chimed Luke Evans. "The guys that build these are true magicians."

A major USH enthusiast, Tyrese Gibson seemed thrilled to have become a permanent fixture on the Studio Tour as well as a patron. "You're able to get on the tram and experience your favorite movie and TV show sets; that's a big deal," he said. "Everything about Universal Studios puts you in the driver's seat to really experience Hollywood. [And] *Fast & Furious* has the best fans in the world!"

Mark Woodbury, president of Universal Creative — an extraordinarily busy department within NBC Universal's theme park division this year, particularly with the June announcement that The Wizarding World of Harry Potter themed area will debut at USH in 2016 — summed it all up: "Our collaboration with Universal Pictures to create an authentic experience through epic storytelling and technological breakthroughs continues to be a hallmark of Universal Studios Hollywood."

•universalstudios  
hollywood.com



Universal Studios Hollywood president Larry Kurzweil (second from left) assists *Fast & Furious — Supercharged* ride film stars (from left) Tyrese Gibson, Michelle Rodriguez and Vin Diesel with the ceremonial "chain-cutting" at the attraction's June 23 media preview.

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# Hoffman's Playland reborn as Huck Finn's Playland

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

ALBANY, N.Y. — After 62 years of a successful operation, Dave and Ruth Hoffman decided it was time to retire after the 2014 season. Hoffman's Playland, located in Colonie, N.Y., closed last September 14. There was very strong community support to somehow save the rides and keep the park in operation, somewhere in the area. Many suitors made appeals, even local and county government. However it was the bid by brothers Jeff and Reid Sperber that made the difference.

Jeff Sperber is president and CEO of Huck Finn's Warehouse (brother Reid Sperber serves as the CFO) in nearby North Albany — a mere six miles from the old location. In fact, the furniture store has been known for being a "fun"

place for kids. Various departments house different small, kid-friendly, attractions: a school bus, subway restaurant, a merry-go-round in the upholstery department and a horse ride in the sleep center. The furniture warehouse, located in an industrial area, had vacant land adjacent to their store — suitable for a four-acre children's amusement park. The 1.8 million dollar sale and move included grant money that was secured from state and local business development agencies as well.

Last fall, Sperber announced the park was relocating within the same county and thanked the county leaders for their support during a public announcement.

"If it wasn't for the county executive, we wouldn't be standing here today," said Jeffrey Sperber of Huck Finn's Warehouse. "I was convinced that we could make this happen and I am pleased that we were able to save Hoffman's Playland. I intend this to be a family place and a place that will anchor further economic development in this community. I am looking forward to 2015 and a new beginning for Hoffman's."

Throughout the fall, winter and spring, working with a general contractor, architect and excavators, Sperber was able to move and relocate 17 rides to 25 Erie Boulevard, near the I-787 and I-90 Interstate highway corridor. Sperber explained their timetable: "We bought the rides in October. We dismantled all of them and put them inside in November. We spent December to mid-April restoring every piece of every ride. We excavated and built the entire park in 60 days: April 17 to June 17."

Each of the rides are on new pads with landscaping, including rock gardens and a brick walkway throughout the park to alleviate any potential congestion, making it easy to get from one ride to the next. The train station building doubles with restrooms and a concession stand window. There are also two tented areas on the grounds for birthday parties. The bumper cars were not set up for the inaugural season, as they "require a structure that was impossible to complete in time for this



The former Hoffman's Playland reopened on June 18, 2015, as the \$1.8 million Huck Finn's Playland. The new four-acre park is just six miles from its previous location. All of the 17 rides were relocated from Hoffman's to Huck Finn's and are surrounded by beautiful landscaping and bricked walkways (above right). COURTESY HUCK FINN'S PLAYLAND

season," said Sperber.

When asked if there were challenges throughout the project, Sperber replied, "Everything was a challenge along the way, but nothing that we couldn't overcome. We were totally committed to making this happen."

On June 18, Huck Finn's Playland opened to the public for the first time. The large crowd generated tremendous response. "Opening day was off the charts. People came here from Connecticut, Louisiana, Minnesota, and Florida, just to name a few, to see if their childhood memories would live on. Thousands of kids came from the Capital Region — None were disappointed," said Sperber. He continued, "It went extremely smoothly. We tried to capture Hoffman's Playland plus the new things we added."

Helping Sperber at the new location are four former staff from Hoffman's Playland: Eric Brazee, general manager; Liz Mahoney, food service; Caitlyn Hammer, operations and James Coover, senior ride operator.

Sperber is pleased with

how the Hoffman's Playland heritage is maintained, while updating a few things. "The new Playland totally captures the spirit of the old one with a complete feeling of being brand new. We built a main street walkway that makes it very easy to move from ride to ride without losing track of your kids," he said.

*Amusement Today* asked about the response from the community. Sperber replied: "The guests love the new layout, the additional shaded areas for resting or eating, the new train tunnel, the multiple entrances and that we have a brand new concession area in addition to the original food stand. Also the scenery from the rides of the state capitol and Hudson River are nice too."

Sperber is proud of what they have been able to accomplish in the off season, from moving and maintaining the rides to installing them at a new location, helping to save a local treasure. The park is more than that as Sperber ex-

plains, "We are also committed to do great things for the community. We have hired a significant number of Albany's youth that would never have a chance to earn money and learn skills without this project. We are also raising money for needy charities that help children through campaigns like our Buy a Brick initiative. People can have their personal message engraved on our walkway for \$50. The money will be donated to ill and underprivileged youth."

Looking ahead, the park plans to add more attractions in the future, based on how well this season does.

The site includes about 250 parking spaces in a 2-acre lot. Overflow is available at the adjacent Huck Finn's Warehouse, should the need arise, increasing the capacity to 400 parking spaces.

Many area residents have been very pleased with Jeff Sperber and Huck Finn's Warehouse preservation efforts of Hoffman's Playland.

## FAST FACTS

### Huck Finn's Playland

25 Erie Boulevard,  
Albany, N.Y.

### Owner

Jeff Sperber, Huck Finn's  
Furniture Warehouse

### Size

4-acres with 2-acres for  
parking 250 vehicles

### Project Cost

\$1.8 million (ride purchase,  
relocation and restoration)

### Staffing/Opening Day

150 seasonal/June 18, 2015

### Relocated Rides:

#### Allan Herschell:

1953 Merry-Go-Round  
1953 Wet Boats  
1955 Jolly Caterpillar  
1957 Skyfighter  
1959 Helicopter Ride  
1960 Little Dipper Coaster  
1967 Iron Horse Train

#### Eli Bridge:

1959 Baby Ferris Wheel  
1965 Scrambler  
1971 Ferris wheel

#### Hampton:

1965 Combo Car Ride  
1976 Tubs-O-Fun

#### Bradley & Kaye:

1980 Balloon Flight  
1985 Red Baron Ride

#### Hrubetz:

1974 Paratrooper

#### Sellner:

1974 Tilt-A-Whirl

#### Venture:

1989 4x4 Pick Up Ride



# Character-based toy line inspires new themed area

## Heartlake City creates a new beat at Legoland California Resort

**AT:** Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

CARLSBAD, Calif. — Having spent its first 16 years steadily expanding from a smallish, almost experimental family theme park concept into a thriving, full-fledged vacation destination, Legoland California Resort has arrived at a level of success that has allowed it — in the best tradition of the toy bricks that form its creative foundation — to embark on some reinvention.

That's what this major Southern California tourist draw north of San Diego has done in a former area of the park that was mostly a foot-traffic thoroughway to other attractions. On May 21, after about five months of construction, renovation, landscaping and ride installation, it officially opened Heartlake City. The section is based on the Lego Group's popular toy line and animated TV show *Lego Friends*, which follow the personalities and adventures of five girls: Andrea, Emma, Mia, Olivia and Stephanie.

Heartlake City's public debut was preceded a day earlier by a purple carpet media preview. Celebrity guests including professional skateboarder Tony Hawk, model-actress Gena Lee Nolin, actor Barry Sloane of the ABC-TV series *Revenge*, San Diego Padres pitcher Ian Kennedy and a number of Make-a-Wish families were among the first to explore the new land.

"It's a whole new space," said Jake Gonzales, media relations representative for Legoland California Resort, noting that the half-acre location on the park's west side — between Fairy Tale Brook and Duplo Village — contained a musical fountain and some interactive play elements prior to the makeover. "We've injected additional color and energy into this portion of the park. And the theme is great because the toy items are popular and most kids are already familiar with them."

Heartlake City, indeed, is packed with fun around every corner.

Young guests can enjoy living like a Lego Friend for a day while joining the section's signature new ride, Mia's Riding Camp — a 50-foot-diameter carousel custom-manufactured by Chance Rides of Wichita, Kan., featuring 60 horses and two jeeps. Gonzales pointed out that, with three speeds and a capacity of 1,000 riders per hour, the attraction provides more than a mere merry-go-round experience. "It actually starts off at a slower pace, and the ride begins talking to you about learning horseback riding," he said. "And then the pace picks up to a full gallop. It's really designed for all ages."

Heartlake City also invites everyone to dance and sing along at the centrally located Friends Forever Stage, which offers a 20-minute mu-



The signature ride at Legoland's Heartlake City is Mia's Riding Camp, a 50-foot-diameter carousel custom-built by Chance Rides and featuring 60 horses and two jeeps. COURTESY LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA RESORT

sical performance and mini dance party several times a day (and cartoon scenes projected on a large digital screen in between). At the adjacent, heart-shaped Heartlake Fountain, kids can freely splash about between shows.

For hands-on creative fun, there's Heartlake Stables — the new land's locus of brick-building activities that also provides photo ops with carousel-style horses rendered in the manner of the cartoons. There are dozens of professionally Lego-made examples of flora and fauna around the stables for inspiration; life-size models of the five Lego Friends characters that adorn the new area, in fact, required 30,000 toy bricks each to complete. Lego Friends toys and products are available for purchase at the Heartlake City Boutique.

Guests can conclude their visit to Heartlake City on a particularly sweet note

at the City Park Crêperie. "With [Legoland owner Merlin Entertainments] being very much a European-based company, we've introduced freshly made crêpes in this area of the park as something new for kids to try," Gonzales said.

He added that Heartlake City exemplifies how Legoland California Resort will continue to add major attractions each year to remain competitive in the Southern California theme park market.

"The park is in constant motion — always evolving and improving. Heartlake City brings to it a new dimension."

• [www.legoland.com](http://www.legoland.com)



Mia's Riding Adventure, a Zamperla Disk'O Coaster, a featured attraction of the new Heartlake City that recently opened at the Legoland Florida Resort. COURTESY LEGOLAND FLORIDA RESORT

### Legoland Florida brings Heartlake City south

WINTER HAVEN, Fla. — Just a month after Legoland California Resort introduced Heartlake City, its Florida counterpart opened a larger version of the Lego Friends-populated themed land on its 150-acre property here June 26.

Some highlights of the Heartlake City in the heart of the Sunshine State:

• **Mia's Riding Adventure** is an attraction themed around Lego Friends character Mia's love of horses. The Zamperla Disk'O Coaster, seats up to 40 passengers on a circular platform with outward-facing horse-shaped seats, and then spins in circles while traveling forward and backward on a wide U-shaped track.

• **Friends to the Rescue** is an interactive musical show starring the Lego Friends as they work together at Heartlake Hall to ensure their concert goes off without a hitch.

• **Heartlake Stepping Tones Fountain** is a heart-shaped fountain filled with Lego brick instruments that play real music triggered by interactive icons.

• **Heartlake Mall** features several retail areas offering a variety of Lego products, including the Lego Friends toy line.

"Heartlake City offers an interactive Lego Friends experience for guests of all ages," said Adrian Jones, general manager of Legoland Florida Resort, which also has the only Lego Friends-themed hotel rooms in the U.S. "When combined with a stay in a Lego Friends-themed room or suite, it will allow guests to further immerse themselves in the world of Lego Friends."

—Dean Lamanna



Heartlake City has remade a previously undefined area at Legoland into an animated themed land starring the Lego Friends. While the Heartlake City Boutique (center) offers related toys and products, the City Park Crêperie and the Heartlake Fountain are two locations that present life-sized versions of the cartoon characters built from Lego bricks.

AT/DEAN LAMANNA



# 2015 San Diego County Fair draws 2nd largest attendance

**AT:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

DEL MAR, Calif. — The San Diego County Fair drew 1,503,508 fairgoers during its 2015 run June 5-July 5, the second largest in the fair's history.

The fair, with a 2015 theme of "A Fair to Remember," set an overall attendance record in 2012 with 1,517,508, and although this year's figures were close, that 2012 record has yet to be broken. Attendance in 2014 was 1,457,130.

"We want to thank everyone in San Diego County and beyond for coming to the 2015 San Diego County Fair to enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to unite two major venues in the State of California," said Timothy Fennell, CEO and general manager. "This year's fair theme showcased the 1915 Exposition and Balboa Park in our theme exhibit and throughout the fairgrounds."

The fair changes its theme annually and it's the extent of that theming that is one factor

attributed to the event's success, said Linda Zweig, fair's media relations.

"We have a beautiful facade and we heavily theme it every year," Zweig said. "And, then, once you get into the fair, we have that theming everywhere, on the walkways, the buildings. This year we were able to partner with the city and Balboa Park to present the 'A Fair to Remember' theme."

Plus, weather for the event turned out to be beautiful, although Zweig said they did experience a couple of days of rain, which is unusual.

The San Diego County Fair hosts an independent midway. This year there were 80 rides provided to fairgoers.

The Crazy Mouse, brought in by S & J Entertainment and manufactured by Reverchon, once again came in as the most popular ride this year. It was also the top in 2014.

It was followed by two rides brought in by Ray Cammack Shows, the Grand



The theme for the San Diego County Fair, Del Mar, Calif., this year was "A Fair to Remember." Fair officials change the theme every year. Fairgoers are greeted by the year's theme when they enter the grounds with a highly decorated facade seen in this photo. The theme is used heavily everywhere on the grounds including walkways and buildings. COURTESY SAN DIEGO COUNTY FAIR

Wheel, manufactured by Carousel Holland, and the Sky Ride manufactured by Seatrek, second and third respectively. These two rides ranked second and third in 2014 as well.

The fair also produces several festivals throughout its run. One of those was brand new this year, the 2015 Distilled: San Diego Spirit & Cocktail Festival. The one-day festival drew 985 people to watch as a variety of mixologists presented an array of cocktails.

The fourth annual Toast of the Coast Wine Competition Festival was pretty much sold out, Zweig said. It drew 1,105 guests in two sessions.

The San Diego International Beer Festival also sold out. The three-day event drew 9,517 people whom had an opportunity to sample 480 different beers.

"We had our first ever Farm to Table dinner this year," Zweig said. "It was a huge success. We only had room for 75 people because we weren't sure how this would go over. But, we could have doubled that. For that dinner, we served our award winning wines and beers."

The 66th annual Junior Livestock Auction set a record this year, raising a total of \$449,000 for members of 4-H and FFA.

The fair also brought back its popular comedy series,



The 2015 San Diego County Fair, Del Mar, Calif., drew 1,503,508 guests, the second highest attendance in the event's history. There were 80 rides on the independent midway and an array of foods and games. COURTESY SAN DIEGO COUNTY FAIR

Friday Night Funnies, featuring a whole new lineup of today's comics. In addition, the concert series did very well.

A major grounds renova-

tion became the Fiesta Village, a cultural attraction. The Hispanic area of the fair was moved to this space for the 2015 fair.

## FAST FACTS

### 2015 San Diego County Fair Top 10 Rides

1. **Crazy Mouse**, S&J Entertainment, Reverchon
2. **Grand Wheel**, Ray Cammack Shows, Carousel Holland
3. **Sky Ride**, Ray Cammack Shows, Seatrek
4. **G-Force**, Southern Cross Rides, KMG
5. **Magnum**, Wood Entertainment, Mondial
6. **Sky Flyer**, Bishop Amusements, Zamperla
7. **Fast Trax**, State Fair Spectacular, Fabbri
8. **Olympic Bobs**, Helm & Sons, Chance
9. **Alien Abduction**, Ray Cammack Shows, Wisdom
10. **Rock It**, State Fair Services (Mike Demas), KMG

### Top 10 Food Stands

1. Juicy's LLC III
2. Chicken Charlie II Rotisserie
3. Golden West BBQ
4. Chicken Charlie I Broasted
5. Juicy's LLC II Sausage
6. Chicken Charlie III Pineapple
7. C & C Concessions Ranch
8. Brander I
9. Revolutionary Service Inc. VI
10. B.C.I. Bacon

### By the Numbers

- 221:** Total number of pies consumed at the daily Pie Eating Contest
- 842:** Number of entertainment applications submitted
- 1,000:** Number of pounds of shark consumed at Pignotti's for their combo plates
- 1,106:** Total number of slices of pie consumed at the daily Pie Eating Contest
- 1,348:** Number of photos taken with the mascot Balboa
- 1,823:** Number of band members that performed
- 50,000:** Number of ears of corn grilled by Corn Star



# Extreme heat causes dip in Alameda County Fair attendance numbers

**AT:** Pam Sherborne  
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PLEASANTON, Calif. — Officials at the 2015 Alameda County Fair reported a dip in attendance this year compared to 2014's fair and the multiple days of triple digit weather was definitely the cause. The fair ran June 17-July 5.

Angel Moore, the fair's marketing and communications manager, said attendance this year reached 444,923, representing a drop of 6.5 percent from 2014 numbers. There were three days during the fair's run that actually reached record temperatures.

Those days were June 25 with a high temperature of 101 degrees; June 30, 108; and July 1, 105 degrees. And, if one is searching those temperatures from other sources, such as weather.com, those temperatures go up several degrees to 102, 110, and 106 respectively.

This year's fair did set one record. There was \$650,461 raised during the live agricultural auction, breaking an all-time record.

New this year was the Action Zone Arena.

"The Action Zone Arena brought in packed crowds," Moore said.

The Action Zone Arena featured Extreme Rodeo, Monster Trucks and the Demolition Derby.

And, in addition to the Freestyle Motorcross, a different new show was featured each week.

Butler Amusements provided approximately 50 rides for the midway. New rides included the Pirate Jet and Spinning Coaster, both from SBF.

The Pirate Jet actually made its U.S. debut with Butler Amusements this season, being the first one in the U.S.

Passengers climb aboard and join an armada of six pirate ships each capable of holding four children or one adult and two children per ship, while they gently rotate around a central friendly pirate character. Each ship sails up and down simulating a trip on the high seas.

Moore said the most pop-



Butler provided 50 rides for the midway of the 2015 Alameda County Fair, Pleasanton, Calif., June 17-July 5, including this Zierer Wave Swinger. The fair reported a dip in attendance this year with 444,923 fairgoers attending. Fair officials attributed the fewer guests this year to the triple digit temperatures experienced during this year's run.

COURTESY ALAMEDA COUNTY FAIR

ular ride on the midway during those hot days was the White Water Flume.

"Corn dogs are still the fair's biggest sellers selling 53,351," Moore said, adding there were 26,068 hamburgers sold, and 14,470 turkey legs sold.

This was the second year for the Snackdown competition, a food competition. Winners this year were:

- Grand Champion, Deep Fried Wood Fired Pastrami Pizza, Tony Cardinali, Cardinali Wood Fire Pizza;

- Best Taste, Cap'n Crunch Shrimp on a Stick with Sweet Sriracha Sauce, Don Delahoyde, Sharkey's Fish Fry;

- Most Creative, Deep-Fried Carmelized Bananas Foster, Tony Cardinali, Cardinali Grill; and

- Best Theme (Rock the Red, White & Blue), Deep Fried PBJ Cheesecake with Bubblegum Frosting, Jacqueline Bradbury, Sweet Cheeks.

The fair's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular featured a live performance by the Oakland East Bay Symphony. "The crowd loved the new addition," Moore said.

"Additionally, Oak Tree Racing Association returned as a live racing partner enhancing the quality of the fair's race meet with bigger prize money," Moore said.

## Populous begins work on San Antonio Livestock Show & Rodeo



Populous, fairgrounds and livestock show master planners and architects, have been commissioned by the San Antonio Livestock Show & Rodeo to develop an expansion master plan. Shown left to right at the Master Planning Kick-Off Meeting are: Glen Alan Phillips, assistant executive director-San Antonio Livestock Show & Rodeo; Charlie Smith, AIA, NCARB, Populous; Keith Martin, executive director/CEO and Debbie Dreyfus-Schronk, assistant executive director/COO both with San Antonio Livestock Show & Rodeo. Populous is also currently involved with renovating San Antonio's Alamodome and the San Antonio Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center.

COURTESY SAN ANTONIO LIVESTOCK SHOW & RODEO

## Populous presents at Florida Federation of Fairs – IAFE Zone 2 Convention



Populous was a program presenter at the recent joint Florida Federation of Fairs — IAFE Zone 2 annual convention in Saint Augustine, Florida. Charlie Smith, senior principal at the firm, presented on creative facility renovations. Pictured left to right are: Bill Bourne, senior associate of Populous; Rick Vymlytil, president/CEO of the South Florida Fair and president of the Florida Federation of Fairs, John Sykes, president/CEO of the East Texas Fair and International Association of Fairs & Expos Chair and David Forkner, principal of Populous. COURTESY POPULOUS

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## CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne  
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The annual Independence Day Celebration fireworks show at **Cal Expo**, Sacramento, ended early, July 4, after one of the five-inch mortars used to launch the fireworks experienced a catastrophic failure. The show was approximately halfway through its 23-minute planned display.

An investigation is being led by California Forestry and Fire Protection to determine the cause of the incident. Fireworks technicians dismantled the remaining fireworks and launched a couple of the larger shells the day after the failed event.

Approximately 25,000 people showed up to the free event at Cal Expo and thousands of others gathered nearby to watch the annual event.

**Rick Pickering**, CEO of Cal Expo and the California State Fair, was quoted in a press release as saying: "While all parties are truly disappointed that this unfortunate incident occurred, it is prudent to act with the upmost care for the safety of the public and fireworks' personnel."

**Denny Stoecklein**, general manager, **Kansas State Fair**, Hutchinson, is leaving the post after more than 12 years.

Stoecklein told a local news agency in June that he has taken a new job as director of marketing and public information for Hutchinson Community College.

"It was one of those things," he was quoted as saying. "I wasn't out looking for a job, but I always had an interest in the college environment."

His last day with the fair was July 17. He was to start his new job July 20.

The **Stanislaus County Fair Board**, Turlock, Calif., announced last month it had selected **Matthew Cranford**, a San Joaquin Valley, Calif., native, as its new chief executive officer.

Cranford, 37, has worked at the **San Mateo County Fair** since 2008 and as fair manager since 2009, according to a news release. He also was operations manager at **Modesto's State Theatre** from 2002 to 2004, overseeing concerts and independent films.

Cranford takes the reins from **Chris Borovansky**, who announced in March that he was retiring in August after more than five years as the fair's CEO and more than 35 years managing fairs in California and Oregon.

Cranford was to attend the 2015 fair, which got underway July 10 for its 10-day run. He will officially start his job Aug. 5.

**Ionia (Mich.) Free Fair** manager **Beverly Clark** announced last month that the **2015 Centennial Fair**, which was held July 16-25, would be her last as the fair's manager. Clark came to the Ionia Free Fair after a long and active career in the amusement industry when her husband Doug became the Ionia Free Fair's manager in 2004.

"It literally began as a labor of love," Beverly Clark said. "Doug joined the Fair as its manager in 2004 and the rest, as they say, is history."

Together she and Doug brought many improvements to the fair, along with assisting the **Ionia Free Fair Association** with a framework for preparing the fair for the future.

With Doug's untimely death in 2007, Bev

stepped into his shoes and never looked back.

She will remain in charge through the end of the fiscal year and that ends in September. She plans to remain involved as a member of the fair board, which is actively seeking a new manager.

The **New Mexico State Fair**, Albuquerque, is teaming up with **La Cumbre Brewing Company** and master brewer **Jeff Erway** to create a special beer that will be sold at the fair and other special events.

The brew is a cream ale, made with locally grown ingredients including the hops and barley.

The idea for the beer came after a casual conversation between the state fair general manager and the director of the **New Mexico Brewer's Guild**.

Starting September 10, the beer will be available for purchase at the fair.

The **Indiana State Fair**, Indianapolis, plans a few changes for this year's edition set for Aug. 7-23. One change is a hike in admission tickets from \$10 to \$12. Advance tickets increased from \$7 to \$8. The last ticket increase at the fair was in 2012.

**Lesley Gordon**, fair spokeswoman, said the state fair relies on ticket sales, concessions and other fees for about 80 percent of its revenue.

Also changing is the location of the iconic giant cheese sculpture. It is moving to the Purdue Extension Ag/Hort Building. In past years, it was on display at the Pioneer Our Land Pavilion.

New additions this year include a medieval jousting tournament, a rolling museum commemorating Indiana's history called the Bicentennial Train, alcohol sales at concerts as well as a Beer and Wine Exhibition, a smart phone recharging lounge, and a new theme, the Year of the Farmer.

The *Entrepreneur* business publication recently looked at state fair foods to find some of the most absurd for 2015. Since it was mid-summer, the publication couldn't include those state fairs that hadn't announced their food list. However, the publication put together a list of the 12 of the most absurd from those state fairs that had taken place and/or had already announced. Here is that list:

1. Ultimate Bacon Explosion from the **Iowa State Fair**, Des Moines, Aug. 13-23
2. S'mores Shake from the **Indiana State Fair**, Indianapolis, Aug. 7-23
3. Apple Pie on a Stick, **Iowa State Fair**
4. Grandma Deb's Snicker Bar Salad from the **Minnesota State Fair**, St. Paul, Aug. 27-Sept. 7
5. Bacon Bottom Porker Pizza from the **Wisconsin State Fair**, West Allis, Aug. 6-16
6. Deep Fried Oreo Burger, **Florida State Fair**, Feb. 6-17
7. Deep Fried Nacho Balls, **Iowa State Fair**
8. Mac and Cheese Cupcake, **Minnesota State Fair**
9. Watermelon Beverage served in a Watermelon, **Wisconsin State Fair**
10. Deep Fried Starbucks Coffee, **California State Fair**, Sacramento, July 10-26
11. Sriracha Balls, **Minnesota State Fair**
12. Deep Fried Alligator On-a-Stick, **Wisconsin State Fair**.



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# Erie County Fair's rich history dates back to 1819

AT: Pam Sherborne

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HAMBURG, N.Y. — The Erie County Fair's work on its 175th anniversary last year was a very successful practice run for the next milestone, the 200th anniversary, which will be celebrated in the year 2039.

In the meantime, every fair brings that year closer including the 2015 edition set for Aug. 12-23.

"Although we are celebrating our 176th fair in 2015, we are focused on our bicentennial fair in 2039," said Erie County Fair CEO and Fair Manager Dennis Lang. "The children of today will be the parents of tomorrow. We are creating the memories and emotional bonds now that will fuel our success in the future."

## FAIR FOCUS

Marty Biniasz, manager of special events, said: "I like to tell people all the work we did on our 175th anniversary last year, the updating of our archives, recording memories, was practice for our 200th anniversary."

Biniasz even penned a book on the fair's history. Published by Arcadia and simply called *Erie County Fair*, the book was written on behalf of the fair.

Last year's event set an attendance record of 1,220,101 million people. The fair boasts that it is the largest independent county fair in the U.S. It became the country's largest county fair for the first time in 1970 and is currently the country's third largest county fair.

It is also currently the largest 12-day in the U.S. as well as the largest independent county



Above left, is a recent photo of the Erie County Fair, Hamburg, N.Y. It is set to run its 176th fair Aug. 12-23. Above right, is a photo of the 1890 San Francisco Cable Car, California #17, which was purchased and brought to the Erie County Fair in 1962. The purchase price of the car then was \$8,000. It operated for many years on the fairgrounds but now sits on display. It received a major cosmetic overhaul in 2009. COURTESY ERIE COUNTY FAIR



fair in the U.S.

The roots of the Erie County Fair go back to 1819. That was the year the Erie County Agricultural Society, then called the Niagara County Horticultural Society, was formed. This organization was able to put together a fair in Buffalo, N.Y., the next year. That was the first agricultural fair in the region.

The reason the fair won't be celebrating 200 years in 2020 is because the event was not held annually every year thereafter.

"Pioneer fairs were held in 1820 and 1821," Biniasz said. "Then, after a 20-year hiatus, the Erie County Agricultural Society re-established and held annual fairs from 1841 through 1855."

Then, in 1856, the original Society was reorganized under a state legislative act and the fair held in 1856 was, again, given the number "one."

"In 1937, the Board of Man-

agers took action to incorporate the first 15 fairs plus one fair added to the count that was held in conjunction with the New York State Fair in 1856," Biniasz said. "In 1937, the 97th fair was held. No fair was held in 1943 due to WWII. In 1963, after the pioneer fairs of 1820 and 1821 were fully documented, their numbers were added to the official numbering system making the 1964 fair the 125th."

After many years of the fair being held in Buffalo, N.Y., it was moved throughout different locations in Aurora, Lancaster, East Hamburg, (now Orchard Park) West Seneca, and Springville from 1851-1867. In 1868, the Society moved the fair to its Hamburg location and it has remained there ever since.

Originally, the Hamburg location for the fair was 12 acres. Over the years, the fairgrounds have grown to cover 275 acres.

Likewise, the fair began as a one-day event held in the fall. It, too, has grown to become an 12-day event held each August.

It became the country's largest county fair for the first time in 1970 and is currently the country's third largest county fair.

One of the notable and perhaps one of the most important historical facts related to the fair is the long history it has shared with the James E. Strates Shows. That show has been playing the fair every year since 1924.

"We have a letter from James E. Strates," said Biniasz. "He wrote a letter saying that he wanted to play our fair. We have it framed. At that time an-

other larger and more spectacular show was playing the fair. It was almost like we downgraded to hire Strates."

Biniasz said no one really knows the facts behind that carnival change but Strates has played the show since and that is history.

"In the 1930s and '40s, as the Erie County Fair was growing, so was the Strates Shows," he said. "It is like we grew up together."

The James E. Strates Shows is the only railroad carnival operating in the U.S. today. It still arrives at the Erie Railroad Depot in the Village of Hamburg 2.35 miles and a 10-minute drive away. Changes to the railway system over the years has created changes for the show, however.

"They have taken off their Pullman cars," Biniasz said. "Last year was the first year they did this. They no longer house their employees on the train, but their trailers and equipment still arrive by train."

The carnival provides the fair's midway with approximately 70 rides and 100 games.

"We are extremely proud of our relationship with the Strates family," said Erie County Fair CEO and Fair Manager Dennis Lang. "Our partnership continues to grow and is getting stronger every year."

The Erie County Fair is also home to an original San Francisco cable car. Biniasz said in 1962, the Erie County Agricultural Society purchased the Municipal Railway of San Francisco Cable Car that had been

built in 1890 for \$8,000.

California #17 was mounted on a bus chassis on the west coast and driven across country by Norman Dust and his wife Lorraine. During the 2500 mile journey to Hamburg, the Dusts encountered all types of weather including snow covered roads as the trek took the cable car through the Rocky Mountains.

"For over 50 years, the car has served as a mobile ambassador for the fair appearing at hundreds of parades and festivals as well as being on display at the fair," Biniasz said. "The car was mechanically restored 1985 and experienced a major cosmetic overhaul in 2009. The trolley no longer operates and is a static display."

## Erie County Fairgrounds By the Numbers

275 acres;  
86 permanent buildings and structures;  
4 green parks;  
and 15,000 parking spaces

## Fun Facts

- Current annual attendance tops a million
- 2014 Fair was an all-time record breaker with gate attendance at 1.2 million
- Largest independent county fair in the United States
- 12-month attendance to fairgrounds is three million (Events Center, Gaming Center, Buffalo Raceway, Lights Festival, etc.)
- 70 food vendors/390 total vendors on site during fair



Multiple Eli Wheels dominate the skyline at the Erie County Fair in this 1946 rooftop view. COURTESY ERIE COUNTY FAIR



## 2015 Calgary Stampede experiences attendance drop

**AT: Pam Sherborne**  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

CALGARY, Alta. — Officials of the 2015 Calgary Stampede were very pleased with results this year. Even with a province-wide economic downturn, the event, held July 3-12, drew 1,168,509.

According to Jennifer Booth, the Stampede publicity manager, officials knew the 2014 attendance of 1,263,428 was going to be a tough figure to beat.

Last year's attendance was the second highest in the event's history, after the 1.4 million that turned out to celebrate the Stampede's 100th birthday in 2012.

Pleasant weather, for the most part, prevailed this year but a sudden cancellation of Miranda Lambert's concert at the Saddledome was attributed to some of the drop of attendance. However, the event closed out with three big concerts, coupled with a run on pre-sale rodeo tickets, bolstering attendance numbers at the end of the fair.

The Calgary Stampede kicked off on Friday, July 3, with the traditional Calgary Stampede Parade. It marched through the streets of Calgary and featured 125 entries made up of 35 floats, 12 marching bands, more than 700 horses and approximately 4,000 participants.

A few highlights this year included the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games Torch Relay entry, the Beakerhead float and the Canadian Armed Forces.

Stampede's President Bill Gray was quoted by a local news agency that he felt the entertainment this year was better than the 2014 event. He said the circus show at the Corral "was a hard ticket to get all week," and the lineup at the Coca-Cola Stage, events in the agriculture barns, and

shows like Super Dogs drew large crowds for all 10 days.

Other entertainment included the agricultural and chuck wagon events. Grandstand entertainment extravaganzas were held nightly and ended with a display of fireworks.

North American Midway Entertainment provided about 60 rides the midway for the event.

The 2015 Calgary Stampede, Alberta, Canada, which ran July 3-12, drew 1,168,509 fairgoers, a dip from the 2014 attendance numbers, but fair officials were very pleased with the results. Here is an overview of the fairgrounds with the nightly fireworks show.

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CALGARY STAMPEDE



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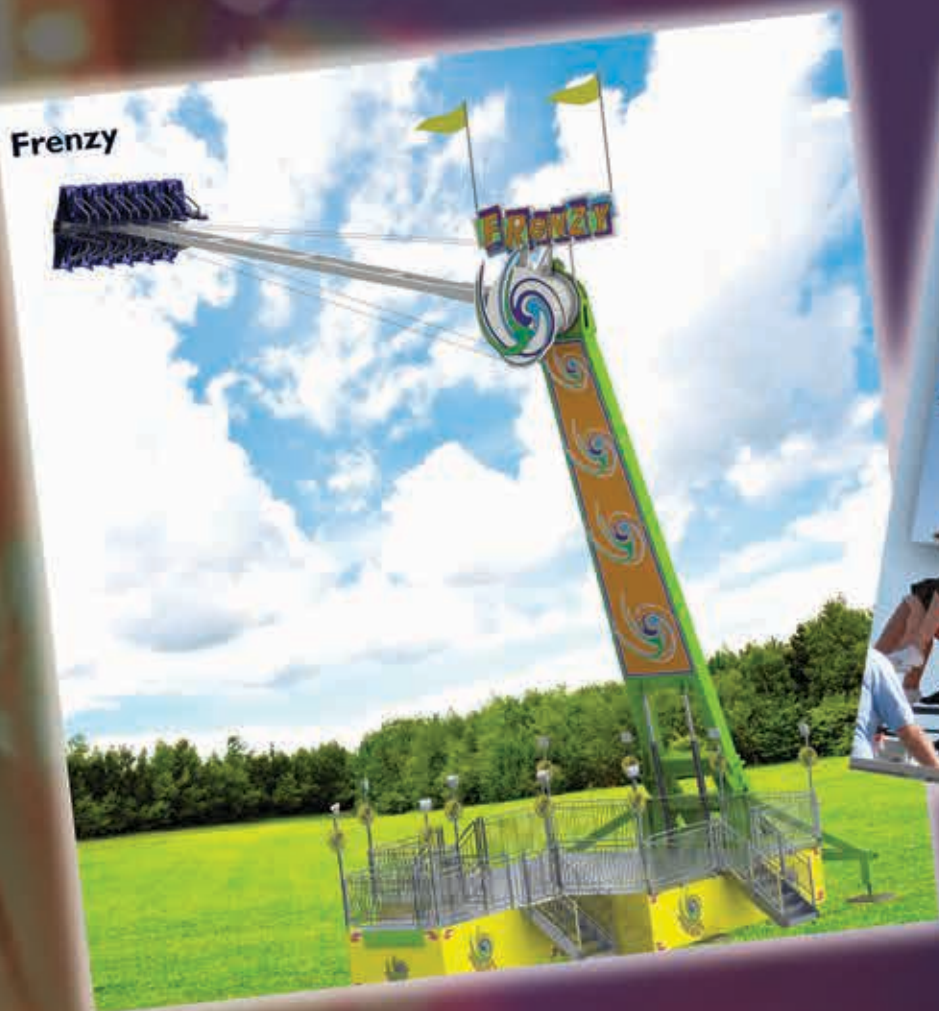




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# BUSINESS, SAFETY, & CLASSIFIED

► MarketWatch — Page 38 / AIMS News — Pages 41 / Book Review — Page 42 / CLASSIFIED — Page 43

## 2015 Golden Ticket Awards event registration underway

Event registration, itinerary and hotel information online at [www.GoldenTicketAwards.com](http://www.GoldenTicketAwards.com)

NEW YORK CITY, N.Y. — It's the Networking Event of the Year! Start spreading the news — industry friends old and new will gather for *Amusement Today's* annual Golden Ticket Awards at the birthplace of the American amusement park, Coney Island. The new Luna Park in greater New York City, is the location for this year's "don't miss" event on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12. The complete itinerary, registration and hotel information are now available at [goldenticketawards.com](http://goldenticketawards.com).

The Golden Ticket Awards event will officially kick off on Friday, Sept.

11. The day is open for attendees to explore New York City. The festivities begin in the evening with a special Roaring 20s-themed cocktail party and dinner reception at Victorian Gardens at Wollman Rink in New York City's beautiful and iconic Central Park. Zamperla will serve as the host for all 2015 Golden Ticket Awards festivities.

Attendees will have the opportunity before the awards show on Saturday, Sept. 12, to tour downtown NYC on a double-decker bus that is narrated by a licensed guide who knows the city inside and out. Special tour bus wristbands will be provided to all registered attendees. A private shuttle bus will transport participants to Luna Park at Coney Island the afternoon of Septem-



ber 12 to take in the sights and sounds of one of the oldest and most beloved amusement areas in the world. The Golden Ticket Awards presentation will be at the historic Gargiulo's Restaurant. The event concludes that night with a special firework show viewable from the Coney Island Boardwalk.

To check out the itinerary and hotel information (also see pages 22 & 23) for the Golden Ticket Awards, as well as to register, please visit [\[enticketawards.com\]\(http://enticketawards.com\). ALL attendees MUST register online. This event is reserved for working professionals in the amusement industry. Representatives from parks and attractions, manufacturers, suppliers, consultants and more will come together to network and celebrate another industry season.](http://gold-</a></p>
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The Park Lane Hotel across the street from Central Park will serve as the host hotel for the event. Specific information and rates can be found at [goldenticketawards.com](http://goldenticketawards.com).

This is the 18th annual year for the Golden Ticket Awards; they are presented to the "Best of the Best" in the amusement industry and are calculated from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*.

## Chicago's Navy Pier adding larger Ferris wheel in 2016



Chicago's Navy Pier has purchased a new 196-foot-tall Ferris wheel from Dutch Wheels of the Netherlands to replace the current wheel for the pier's centennial celebration in 2016. Standing 49 feet taller than the current wheel, which opened in 1995, the new version will feature enclosed climate-controlled gondolas capable of holding 10 riders each that will allow the attraction to operate year-round. COURTESY NAVY PIER

CHICAGO, Ill. — Officials at Navy Pier recently announced that a new Ferris wheel has been purchased and will debut at the Pier in time for its 2016 Centennial. The new 196-foot-tall wheel will fit into the space that will be vacated by the existing wheel that was installed in 1995. It will offer a wide assortment of enhanced features and amenities, including accommodations for up to 180 more passengers per ride and temperature-controlled gondolas allowing year-round operation.

The new wheel, which will be 49 feet taller than the existing wheel, is being privately financed by a loan from Fifth Third Bank. No public money was used toward its purchase.

"The redevelopment of Navy Pier is vital to our ongoing efforts to attract 55 million visitors annually to the City of Chicago by 2020, creating new jobs and injecting millions of dollars into our local economy," said Chicago Mayor

Rahm Emanuel. "I commend Navy Pier on the purchase of this new Ferris wheel, as it will bring new energy to this one-of-a-kind Chicago attraction."

Since the first-ever Ferris wheel was unveiled at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the Ferris wheel has been a hallmark of Chicago. The wheel symbolizes how Chicago has remained true to Daniel Burnham's vision for the "people's pier," as articulated in his famous 1909 Plan of Chicago. Today, Navy Pier, Inc., is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization that maintains and oversees Navy Pier and its redevelopment into a bolder, greener and more contemporary urban space.

"As we re-imagine Navy Pier, we couldn't think of a more exciting and appropriate way to celebrate the upcoming 2016 Centennial Celebration than acquiring a brand new world-class Ferris wheel," said William J. Brodsky, chairman of

► See NAVY PIER, page 37

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# Ride Entertainment begins Pier 62 Carousel operation

MANHATTAN, N.Y. — Ride Entertainment’s Operations Division was recently awarded the operating contract for the Pier 62 Carousel. Located in Manhattan’s Hudson River Park the ride is a beautiful, whimsical menagerie machine that has run at the property for five years.

The Pier 62 Carousel is a Carousel Works, 3-row menagerie style, featuring 33 creatures

The Pier 62 Carousel operations contract was recently awarded to Ride Entertainment’s Operations division. The Carousel Works ride is located in Hudson River Park in Manhattan, N.Y.

COURTESY  
RIDE ENTERTAINMENT

## FAST FACTS

### Pier 62 Carousel

**Supplier:**  
Carousel Works

**Year Built:**  
2010

**Style:**  
3-row menagerie

**Website:**  
pier62carouselnyc.com

**Location:**  
Pier 62  
in Hudson River Park  
(Chelsea neighborhood,  
Manhattan, New York)

and one chariot. Rides are \$3 for one ticket or \$25 for 10 tickets.

“We are excited and proud to be the new operators of the Pier 62 Carousel,” said David Galst, Ride Entertainment’s managing director of Operations. “With the majority of the carousel figures being inspired by creatures indigenous to the Hudson River area, it is truly one of the most unique carousels in the world. We look forward to not just continuing the operation of the ride, but to making the Pier 62 Carousel a go-to venue for New Yorkers for birthday parties, live entertainment, and family fun,” he noted.

In addition to unique birthday parties, Ride Entertainment has brought its famous free children’s shows to the carousel. They occur every Sunday at 2 and 4 p.m. The Pier 62 carousel is located in beautiful Hudson River Park and is just one of many family attractions at the property. Pier 62 also features beautiful green space designed by famed public garden designer Lynden Miller and a skate park.

Ride Entertainment CFO Ami Abramson said, “Partnering with the Hudson River Park Trust is a thrill. The Trust has proven to be one of the great innovating managers of parks in N.Y. State. We plan to continue in their tradition of excellence in entertainment and activities.”

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## ►NAVY PIER

Continued from page 35

the Navy Pier Inc. board of directors. "The new wheel is yet another example of our continuing commitment to ensure that Navy Pier remains the region's number-one leisure destination and a place of pride for the city and its residents."

Navy Pier, Inc. conducted a thorough six-month worldwide search for a wheel that would best meet the unique structural and operational requirements of the Pier. Working along-

side engineers from Thornton Tomasetti, a new model was selected and purchased -- the DW60 -- from Dutch Wheels, the Netherlands-based company that built the Pier's current wheel. Considered one of the world's top designer and manufacturer of Ferris wheels, Pier leadership was impressed with the company's exemplary safety record and commitment to excellence.

The DW60 will be the first and only one of its kind in the U.S. with similar wheels currently in operation in Hong

Kong and Baku, Azerbaijan. Significant features include two-door gondolas that allow for easy loading and unloading, a fortified structure to withstand winds of 115 miles per hour, and safety glass capable of weathering intense storms.

"One of our goals was to be sure the new wheel would provide our guests with a significantly enhanced year-round experience," said Marilyn K. Gardner, president and CEO, Navy Pier, Inc. "The new wheel will deliver a smoother and

more luxurious ride -- increasing ride time from seven minutes to 12 minutes, and circling three times, not just once as the current wheel does."

The new gondolas will seat up to 10 passengers (the current wheel holds six), include padded seats, TV screens and speakers, and will feature an innovative HVAC condensation drainage system that collects and releases water when gondolas are at the bottom of their rotation to prevent dripping and clouding during rotation.



A sample of the new gondolas for Navy Pier's new wheel. Each gondola can seat up to 10 passengers. COURTESY NAVY PIER

## Shedd Aquarium receives \$2 million commitment from The Grainger Foundation

CHICAGO, Ill. — Shedd Aquarium announced in early July it has received a \$2 million commitment from The Grainger Foundation in support of its recently launched Aquarium Microbiome Project (AMP) — believed to be the world's first comprehensive look at microbiomes in a controlled aquarium ecosystem and how they influence complex environmental conditions and animal health. The three-year commitment will advance the planned research by nearly a decade, enabling the expansion of Shedd's unique, on-site aquatic microbial ecology laboratory and bioinformatics capabilities.

The commitment also positions Shedd as the only accredited aquarium in the nation with onsite capabilities focused on performing high-level hypothesis testing and laboratory sequencing analysis for the built or managed aquatic environment.

"This funding is significant to uncovering mysteries surrounding the tiny, living organisms that are all around us, how they influence the well-being of animals and their homes, and most importantly, how those discoveries may lead to important advances that benefit human health overall," said Dr. Bill Van Bonn, vice president for Animal Health and head of the A. Watson Armour III Center for Animal Health and Welfare at Shedd. "We are excited and extremely grateful for the generosity of The Grainger Foundation and their dedication to advancing projects like this one that are critical to understanding how we can effectively manage these and other human environments in the best way possible."



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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 07/09/15	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	39.09	44.43	26.56
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	428.00	435.10	3.277
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	55.17	60.64	42.75
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	62.01	63.55	49.33
	CMCSK	NASDAQ	61.79	63.27	49.26
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	115.60	117.43	78.54
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1046.00	1298.00	975.00
Great Wolf Resorts	WOLF	NASDAQ	TBD	TBD	TBD
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.53	2.13	1.02
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	11.50	13.70	10.30
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	17.84	27.64	17.25
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	18.26	28.79	15.11
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	8.19	14.78	4.65
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	46.58	51.09	31.77
Skyocean International	00593HK	SEHK	9.10	12.46	3.96
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3900.00	4000.00	2941.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	6.11	8.17	5.08

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED

Worldwide Markets: **ASX**, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; **TSEC**, Taiwan Stock Exchange, Corp.; **TYO/TSE**, Tokyo Stock Exchange

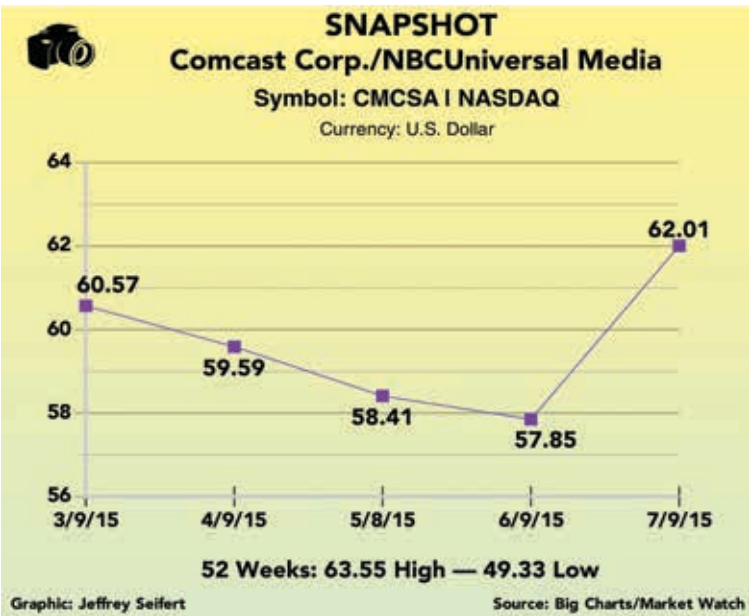
—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal

DIESEL PRICES

Region (U.S.)	As of 07/06/15	Change from 1 year ago
East Coast	\$2.938	- \$1.040
Midwest	\$2.724	- \$1.138
Gulf Coast	\$2.712	- \$1.090
Mountain	\$2.785	- \$1.124
West Coast	\$2.978	- \$1.007
California	\$3.142	- \$0.993

CURRENCY

On 07/10/15 \$1 USD =	
0.0946	EURO
0.6501	GBP (British Pound)
121.20	JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.9471	CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.3429	AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.2717	CAD (Canadian Dollar)



FINANCIAL WATCH

Cedar Fair reports 5 percent increase

SANDUSKY, Ohio — **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** (NYSE: FUN), reported on July 8 preliminary net revenues through July 5, 2015 of approximately \$491 million, an increase of \$24 million, or 5 percent, when compared with the same period a year ago. This period traditionally represents approximately 40 percent of the company's full-year net revenues.

The higher net revenues are a result of a 2 percent increase in attendance, a 2 percent increase in average in-park guest per capita spending and a 10 percent increase in out-of-park revenues, including resort hotels.

Christine McCarthy named CFO at Walt Disney

BURBANK, Calif. — **Christine M. McCarthy** has been named senior executive vice president and chief financial officer and **Kevin Mayer** has been named senior executive vice president and chief strategy officer of **The Walt Disney Company** (NYSE: DIS), effective immediately, it was announced June 30 by **Robert A. Iger**, chairman and chief executive officer.

"Christine has done an incredible job as Disney's treasurer over the past 15 years, and her strong leadership and keen financial acumen make her an ideal chief financial officer," Iger said. "She is highly respected in the finance sector, and in this new role she will have even more impact on creating value for Disney shareholders."

"Kevin has overseen corporate strategy and business development at a time of unprecedented growth for Disney, playing an integral role in our successful acquisitions of Pixar, Marvel and Lucasfilm," Iger said. "With this promotion to the new role of chief strategy officer he will continue to focus on growth opportunities and help position the company for the future."

Disney declares cash dividend

BURBANK, Calif. — **The Walt Disney Company** (NYSE: DIS) board of directors on June 24 declared a cash dividend of \$0.66 per share for the first six months of fiscal 2015, payable July 29 to shareholders of record at the close of business on July 6. With this dividend, Disney will begin paying dividends on a semi-annual basis, rather than once a year.

At a glance...

• **ORLANDO, Fla.** — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** (NYSE: SEAS) announced on July 6 that it will release its second quarter 2015 financial results before the market opens on Thursday, August 6, 2015. In conjunction with the release, the company has scheduled a conference call, which will be broadcast live over the internet, on Thursday, August 6, 2015 at 9 a.m. Eastern Time.

• **LONDON** — **accesso Technology Group plc** (AIM: ACSO), is expanding the reach of its ShoWare and accesso Siriusware ticketing solutions with the addition of 16 new contracts. The contracts are with various venues, museums and other entertainment facilities in the United States and Mexico.

• **GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas** — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** (NYSE: SIX), announced on July 2 that it will participate in the following upcoming investor conferences: Credit Suisse Gaming, Lodging, Leisure & Restaurant Conference – August 6, 2015 at Credit Suisse in New York, N.Y. and Wells Fargo Technology, Media & Telecom Conference – November 11, 2015 at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York, N.Y.

Copies of presentations used at the conferences will be posted on the company's Investor Relations website at: [www.sixflags.com/investors](http://www.sixflags.com/investors).

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**BUSINESS BRIEFS****Texas Gov. signs bill banning Shark Fin Trade**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — The **San Antonio Zoo** was one of 17 **Texas Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)** accredited facilities supporting the legislative Texas ban on Shark Fin Trade known as HB1579.

The 17 (AZA) accredited organizations listed below stood in support of enacting legislation to prohibit the sale, purchase or transport of illegal and unsustainable shark fins within the State of Texas.

A press release from the San Antonio Zoo stated: "We are committed to promoting ecosystem awareness and supporting sustainability in natural resource management. Collectively our organizations represent over \$300 million in economic impact and reach nearly 30 million visitors every year.

"Shark finning is an unsustainable and wasteful harvest practice that is devastating shark populations and threatening the ecological balance of impacted ecosystems. Although, we support sustainable harvest, the uncertain origin of shark fins being exported from Texas motivates us to support the closing of this trade until more transparency and traceability can be achieved. We strongly urge you to take this important step in strengthening the current Federal and International legislation that prohibits the practice and make a real difference in shark conservation."

The supporting Texas zoos were: **Abilene Zoological Gardens**, Abilene; **Caldwell Zoo**, Tyler; **Cameron Park Zoo**, Waco; **Dallas World Aquarium**, Dallas; **Dallas Zoo**, Dallas; **Ellen Trout Zoo**, Lufkin; **El Paso Zoological Society**, El Paso; **Fort Worth Zoo**, Fort Worth; **Fossil Rim Wildlife Center**, Glen Rose; **Gladys Porter Zoo**, Brownsville; **Houston Zoo**, Houston; **Landry's Aquariums**, Houston; **Moody Gardens**, Galveston; **San Antonio Zoo**, San Antonio; **SeaWorld**, San Antonio; **Sea Life Aquarium**, Grapevine and the **Texas State Aquarium**, Corpus Christi.

**PEOPLE WATCH**

• **Core Cashless** recently announced the latest addition to its team. Effective immediately, **Cathy Doucette** has joined Core in the role of New Business Development.

"We couldn't be happier to have Cathy on board," remarked **Patrick Frickleton**, director of Sales and Marketing for Core. "Cathy has a rather impressive combination of personality, industry knowledge and work ethic. She is just a natural fit."

Cathy brings over 25 years experience in the Amusement and Hospitality industry to Core. She has previously held positions with Merit Entertainment (now AMI Networks), Power House Entertainment and Belis Technology, among others.

• **Rawhide Western Town and Event Center**, Chandler, Ariz., recently announced the well-deserved promotion of **Cindi Carver** as general manager. Carver's efforts will focus on all aspects of operations strategy to generate revenue for the 1880s western-themed family entertainment venue.

With extensive experience in the entertainment, event and hospitality industry, Carver brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to Rawhide.

Most recently serving as the Controller at Rawhide, Carver has taken the lead on much more than just accounting and finance and has delved in to learn the ins and outs of the business as a whole.

• **Picsolve**, a leading image capture partner for the leisure and entertainment industry, has announced the appointment of **Anthony Boddie** as its new vice president of Theme Park Operations, North America.

Following Picsolve's recent \$14 million investment in the U.S., the company has recruited heavily in the region, with Boddie's position fundamental to the senior leadership team that provides added value for partners looking to offer enhanced guest experiences and future proof their revenues.

Boddie brings over 25 years of experience in the theme park and attractions industry to his new role, previously working at America's largest amusement concessionaire, Kaman's Art Shoppes.

**Doucette****Carver****Boddie****FASTTRACK**

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

As **Downtown Disney** at **Walt Disney World** continues its transformation into the new entertainment venue **Disney Springs**, one of the latest changes announced is the closing of **DisneyQuest**, the 100,000-square-foot indoor virtual theme park that has made its home on the property's West Side since 1998. In DisneyQuest's place will be a new sports-themed attraction, **NBA Experience**, that will include both an interactive experience and restaurant. DisneyQuest is expected to cease operations in 2016.

• **Six Flags Great Adventure** has become the chain's latest property to offer **Batman: The Ride Backwards** by reversing trains on its popular B&M inverted coaster. Since opening in 1993, **Batman: The Ride** has given more than 27 million rides.

"The ride's intensity is ratcheted way up," said **John Fitzgerald**, Six Flags Great Adventure president. "Thrill seekers will not want to miss this limited-time opportunity to put their inner 'super hero' to the test."

• **SeaWorld Orlando** and **Aquatica** are now featuring a variety of evening presentations where guests can stay later for more thrills and laughs. At SeaWorld, nightly festivities include roller coasters and other rides that offer a new experience when the sun goes down along with **Shamu's Celebration: Light Up The Night**. This returning fan-favorite finds Shamu Stadium transformed with stylistic lighting and colorful backdrops to create a social and celebratory atmosphere ending with a fireworks finale.

Aquatica heats things up with **Island Nights** presented by Coca-Cola. This all-new beach party taking place every Friday and Saturday through August 8 will allow guests to enjoy live DJs, dancing on the beach and an evening menu at Waterstone Grill.

• Two national magazines have released their choices of the best parks in the nation including **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari**. The "15 Best Amusement Parks for Kids" list from *Parents Magazine* features **Disney** and **Universal** parks on both coasts and only two parks from the Midwest. "It's a special honor to be highlighted by a longstanding advice publication such as *Parents Magazine*," said Park President **Matt Eckert**. "They called us out for our rides for children of all ages, plus our mother's nursing room and our high standards for cleanliness."

In addition, this month's edition of **Better Homes & Gardens** names Holiday World on its list of "Top 10 Theme Parks." **Better Homes & Gardens** mentions **Splashin' Safari's** record-breaking Mammoth water coaster as a highlight.

• The **San Antonio Zoo** officially broke ground on its new giraffe exhibit on June 22. Construction is expected to last roughly five months, and the exhibit is set to open in late November. The zoo has been without giraffes for the past five years. The giraffes will be welcomed in a naturalistic habitat that sits along the zoo's notable limestone cliffs. The exhibit

will feature several species of African hoof stock and birds along with something never before seen at the San Antonio Zoo – a giraffe feeding station.

• World-champion and two-time Olympic silver medalist **Elvis Stojko** will headline a new holiday-themed ice show at **Busch Gardens Williamsburg's Christmas Town**. *Twas That Night* is an all-new live performance on ice being created by the same team that produced *London Rocks* and *Scrooge No More!*. The show will be performed at Busch Gardens' Royal Palace Theater starting Nov. 27. Busch Gardens will transform the theater's stage into a glistening frozen pond, creating a nostalgic sense of wonderment during the retelling of this Christmas classic.

"Busch Gardens' newest live show combines the grace of professional figure skating with cherished Christmas music, original holiday songs and magnificent visuals," said Entertainment Director **Bonnie Gilliland**. "Elvis Stojko's masterful skating techniques and his unbounded creativity are helping us produce an emotionally-charged show that is unlike anything else in our lineup."

• The **Themed Entertainment Association** and **AECOM** recently released their annual report tracking the attendance of the world's top-performing theme parks. Notable among 2014's significant gains was South Korea's **Lotte World**, the 14th best-attended theme park in the world, having hosted over 7.6 million visitors, up 2.8 percent from the previous 12-month period. According to park officials, the gains are a direct result of the new *Let's Dream!* nighttime spectacular, which debuted midway through last year. The popular, end-of-day light parade, designed and produced by North Hollywood entertainment design firm **The Goddard Group**, is credited not only for triggering the bump in attendance, but more impressively for a 35 percent boost in visitor length-of-stay. *Let's Dream!* uses advanced technologies, including a holographic effect and the world's largest fleet of choreographed flying objects. The Goddard Group enlisted the help of several A-list collaborators, including world-renowned puppet designer **Michael Curry**, and former Cirque du Soleil chief composer **Benoit Jutras**.

• For six decades, the **Disneyland Resort** has explored the frontiers of immersive storytelling and entertainment technology. And it's not stopping now. A glittering new parade *Paint the Night* new fireworks spectacular *Disneyland Forever*, and all-new *World of Color* show raise the bar, once again, on creativity and entertainment technology, keeping the Disneyland Resort and its guests forever young.

"Few companies have both a legendary past as well as a limitless future," said **Bob Iger**, chairman and CEO of **The Walt Disney Company**. "But we had the great fortune to be founded with a spirit of creativity and innovation – one that continues to define this phenomenal company."



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## Story Land helps kickoff 15th annual Lightning Safety Awareness Week

### SAFETY

GLEN, N.H. — Partners from the Lightning Protection Institute (LPI), the Lightning Safety Alliance (LSA) the National Weather Service (NWS) and Mount Washington Observatory Weather Discovery Center gathered at Story Land Amusement Park in Glen, N.H. for educational events to kickoff Lightning Safety Awareness Week. The 15th annual campaign, which begins June 21, was started by NOAA and NWS in 2001 to help increase awareness about the dangers of lightning and provide the public with safety information to help protect families from lightning's underrated dangers.

The 2015 campaign theme of "Building Lightning Safe Communities," emphasizes the importance of protecting people, property and places against the deadly, yet often underrated lightning threat.

Team members, including Dr. Lightning and Leon the Lightning Lion began events with a



Leon the Lightning Lion and Dr. Lightning kickoff Lightning Safety Awareness Week on June 21 at Story Land Park in N.H. to emphasize the importance of protecting people, property and places against nature's underrated hazard. COURTESY LIGHTNING PROTECTION INSTITUTE

morning press conference to recognize Story Land for its Storm-Ready efforts which support the Building Lightning Safe Communities mission. (Story Land has equipped many of its buildings and structures with lightning protection systems to help safeguard patrons and workers from lightning's dangers.)

Weekend events in N.H. also included a presentation at Mount Washington Observatory Weather Discovery Center and edu-

cational outreach at the Mount Washington Road Race Expo.

The Lightning Protection Institute (LPI) is a not-for-profit, nationwide group founded in 1955 to promote lightning safety, awareness and education and is a leading resource for lightning protection information and system requirements.

—PR Newswire

• [lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://lightningsafety.noaa.gov)  
• [lightning.org](http://lightning.org)



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## NEWS & NOTES

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**Holly Coston**, (714) 697-6654, [h.coston@aimsintl.org](mailto:h.coston@aimsintl.org)

# Seminar Scholarships available, AIMS board meeting set

**Karen Oertley**  
AIMS Executive Director  
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### It's time to plan ahead for the next season

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**IAAPA** (The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions) provides five scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in memory of **Alan Ramsey** who was an avid industry supporter and safety advocate. For more information on the IAAPA Alan Ramsey scholarships, write to [info@aimsintl.org](mailto:info@aimsintl.org).

**OABA** (the Outdoor Amusement Business Association) offers four scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar for OABA members who are first-time Safety Seminar attendees. One of these scholarships is dedicated in memory of **June Hardin**, owner of Wapello Fabrications, who strived for quality, safety and ASTM standards throughout her career. OABA members can contact [oaba@oaba.org](mailto:oaba@oaba.org) for more information and AIMS scholarship applications.

All AIMS Safety Seminar scholarships cover the \$595 tuition fee, which includes class materials, an opening

reception, all lunches and breaks, a completion certificate, and Continuing Education Units (CEU). Additional fees for testing and certification and travel expenses are not included.

### AIMS International annual board meeting

AIMS International's board of directors will meet on September 10, 2015 in New York City. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the **2015 Golden Ticket Awards**, presented by **Amusement Today**, Sept. 11-12, in New York City. This is the perfect time of year for our meeting and the GTA event is a great place to relax, see old friends, and celebrate accomplishments in our industry. This year's event will be hosted by **Zamperla**, a long-time AIMS supporter, member and Seminar Sponsor. We look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones as we visit **Victorian Gardens** in Manhattan's beautiful Central Park and historic Coney Island's **Luna Park**.

All amusement industry professionals are invited to attend the free

networking event. For more information visit: [GoldenTicketAwards.com](http://GoldenTicketAwards.com).

### An added benefit for AIMS Seminar Attendees and Certification Holders

The AIMS Safety Seminar and Certification program are now recognized and pre-approved for credit hour recognition towards **IAAPA Certifications**. IAAPA offers three professional certifications for professionals in the attractions industry: IAAPA Certified Attractions Manager (ICAM), IAAPA Certified Attractions Leader (ICAL), and IAAPA Certified Attractions Executive (ICAE). IAAPA certifications are designed to enhance the knowledge and performance of attractions professionals, to promote the status and credibility of the attractions profession, and to advance uniform standards of practice.

For more information on the IAAPA certification program visit the IAAPA website at [www.iaapa.org](http://www.iaapa.org), or contact Eamon Connor, Director, Education and Certification Programs, at [econnor@iaapa.org](mailto:econnor@iaapa.org).

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# Images of Modern America Freedomland illustrates history of park

**REVIEW:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

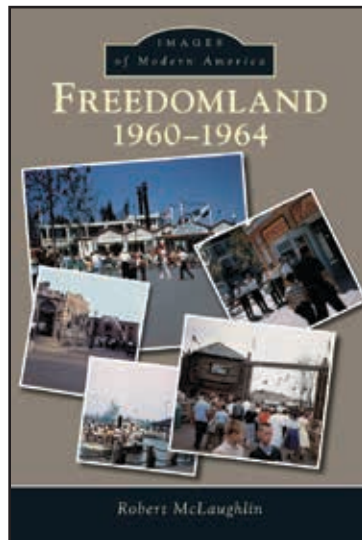
The opening of Disneyland in 1955 changed forever the amusement park industry. The park was so successful that soon everyone wanted a Disneyland of their own in their backyard. New theme parks started springing up all over the country. Some, such as Six Flags Over Texas, enjoyed immediate success, while others failed miserably.

Although Disneyland refuses to acknowledge his participation, much of that park's initial success was due to the efforts of Cornelius Vanderbilt Wood, Jr. (C.V. Wood or Woody) who served as Disney's executive vice president. He was responsible for getting Disneyland from the drawing board to opening day. Within months of Disneyland's opening, however, Wood was separated from the Disney organization.

Always the entrepreneur, Wood convinced investors in other parts of the country that they too could have a Disneyland of their own. It is, therefore, ironic that following Disneyland's success, the next three C.V. Wood projects were spectacular failures. Perhaps the grandest and most notable was New York's Freedomland.

The concept, construction, opening and closure after just five seasons of the "Disneyland of the East" is the subject of *Images of Modern America Freedomland 1960–1964*.

This is the second Freedomland book from author Robert McLaughlin after penning the original *Images of America Freedomland* book released in 2010. McLaughlin, a native of Wakefield, Mass., is no stranger to C.V. Woods' failed parks. Wakefield was home to Pleasure Island. Billed as the "Disneyland of the Northeast" it struggled from 1959 to 1969. McLaughlin also wrote *Images of America Pleasure Island* as well as *Images of Modern America Pleasure Island 1959–1969*. To complete the triptych, McLaughlin is currently writing Magic Moun-



tain for the Images of Modern America series due to be released in 2016. This isn't the Six Flags park of California that everyone is familiar with, but rather another C.V. Wood park in Golden, Colorado. Opening to the public in 1959, it encountered financial difficulties and closed in 1960.

*Images of Modern America Freedomland 1960–1964* is divided into four chapters and includes the requisite acknowledgements and introduction. The introduction mostly provides information about C.V. Wood. Despite some stupendous failures, C.V. Wood did have many successful undertakings and was inducted into the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Hall of Fame in 1994.

Chapter one also serves as somewhat of an introduction, illustrating the path that took Wood from Disneyland to Freedomland. Stops along the way include a look at Magic Mountain and Pleasure Island, with construction photos and concept drawings.

More than half of the book is contained in chapter two which is dedicated to Freedomland during its brief heyday. Here, readers will appreciate the grand scale and massive scope of the theme park. Constructed in the shape of the United States, with seven themed areas, Freedomland attempted to present 200 years of American History in an environment that was meant to be both exciting and educational.

Though marvelous in

its exquisite detail and top notch entertainment, the huge themed area lacked exciting rides. By year three, more money was poured into the debt-ridden park to add traditional attractions found at popular amusement parks.

Sometimes the attention to detail worked against the park. When opened, the park's Von Roll skyride had cars resembling ore buckets that were painted to look like they were covered in rust. Guests found that unappealing so by year two, the support towers were repainted blue and the cabins a bright red, to give the attraction a clean, festive look.

More than 80 beautiful color photographs, complete with captions, show all the attractions a visitor could enjoy. From a ride on an antique horseless carriage through Old New York to a steamship cruise on the Great Lakes to a train ride on a genuine steam locomotive from Chicago to San Francisco. Although lacking in thrill rides, there was no shortage of things to do at Freedomland.

A brief third chapter shows how Freedomland was merchandised. Sound tracks, pennants, posters and trinkets, all bearing the Freedomland name, were sold at the park.

As can be expected, the final chapter covers the demise and closure of Freedomland. As stated elsewhere in the book, Freedomland was doomed before the first shovel even broke ground. C.V. Wood's grandiose vision anticipated an attendance of 5 million visitors the first year. The park never exceeded 1.5 million — a figure that many of today's theme parks would be pleased with.

The park was constructed on land reclaimed from a former dump. Heavy rains in 1961 saturated the soft sub soil causing sidewalks to sink, buildings to shift, and wreaked havoc with the landscaping. Investors, already saddled with \$7 million in debt, kept dumping more money into the park.

On September 15, 1964, Freedomland filed a petition or arrangement under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Act.



Seven different historic U.S. flags from different time periods were flown over the entrance to the park.  
COURTESY ARCADIA PUBLISHING



Many of the thematic elements at Freedomland were copied from Disneyland, including horse-drawn streetcars.  
COURTESY ARCADIA PUBLISHING



In an effort to provide more thrills, this Meteor roller coaster from Mack Rides was added to the park in 1963.  
COURTESY ARCADIA PUBLISHING

That petition was denied on August 30, 1965 and the park was declared bankrupt. This led to disassembly of the park and a sale of assets. Freedomland rides and attractions ended up at parks all across the country including: Pirates World, Florida; Cedar Point, Ohio and Six Flags Great Escape, New York.

*Images of Modern America*

*Freedomland 1960–1964* offers a remarkable collection of rare, vintage and modern images to illustrate the short history of this infamous New York theme park. The book retails for \$22.99 and is available at local bookstores, online retailers or Arcadia Publishing at [www.arcadiahpublishing.com](http://www.arcadiahpublishing.com), (888) 313-2665.





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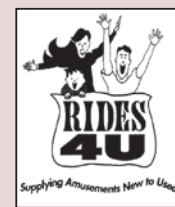
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